**Spring 2020 – MEJO 490.3: Career Exploration and Preparation**Tuesday & Thursday – 12:30pm - 1:45pm|CA 143

**Instructor:** Livis James Freeman, Jr  
**Email:** lfreeman@email.unc.edu  
**Phone:** 919.389.3486  
**Office Hours:** By appointment only  
**Office Location:** 226  
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**COURSE OVERVIEW**  
This course is for seniors only and by the time you’re eligible to take it, you should have already taken the majority of your required major courses, experienced internships and possibly studied abroad. This course is focused on providing detailed information about all communications careers; discovering which careers best suit you; making sure that your brand matches your career choice; and minimalizing the stress from the job search process by helping you maximize mentor relationships, become more effective networkers and understand all available resources. This is essentially the final step in making sure you’re not only ready to represent our Hussman School but to become industry leaders!

This semester, you will:

(1) do a self-evaluation to help determine your skills, strengths, motivations and passions  
(2) learn and understand how the chaos theory and butterfly effect will heavily influence your career choices

(3) hear and learn from former grads turned professionals and industry leaders/experts

(4) become master networkers through executing informational interviews and better understand your job hunt competition   
(5) understand the importance of having mentors and career advocates

(6) be introduced to communications careers and resources to assist your job search  
(7) understand how your brand relates to your career focus   
(8) mold your portfolios/resumes/cover letters/LinkedIn profile to accurately represent your education, experiences and achievements  
(9) learn and execute advanced interviewing techniques

(10) understand corporate etiquette and how to effectively navigate all office environments  
  
This is an advanced and exciting process and I look forward to guiding you through it!

**Required Course Materials, etc**.  
You must download the free e-book: “You Majored in What? Designing your path from college to career” – by Katherine Brookes, ED.D (<https://epdf.tips/you-majored-in-what-mapping-your-path-from-chaos-to-career.html>)

Other reading materials will be assigned throughout the semester.

**Sakai/Email**

Other than this syllabus, important information can be found on Sakai and will also be emailed to you. Updates will be frequent, so check back often and your email for important course information. You are responsible for any course changes that may be made on Sakai or via email, including changes to the syllabus or assignments. Your grades are posted in Sakai only so that you can stay updated on your progress; overall grades on Sakai are rough approximations of your overall grade in the course.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy**

*No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these* [*University Approved Absences*](https://attendance.unc.edu/)*:*

*1.Authorized University activities*

*2.Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service* and/or the *Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)*

*3.Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).*

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. Missing class will result in your final grade being lowered one-half of a letter grade. If you are late to class, there is no guarantee that you will be marked as present. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to meet with your classmates and gather the information on what you missed. Missed in-class assessments and activities cannot be made up unless you were absent due to a University Approved Absence.

**Technology Policy**  
You are permitted to use laptops for note-taking and other work as assigned in class. However, to minimize distractions to your classmates and to me, please minimize the use of your laptop for non-class purposes. When guest speakers are visiting or your classmates are presenting, **LAPTOPS MUST BE CLOSED AND PHONES MUST NOT BE USED**. You may use a pen and paper to take notes. *I will ask guest speakers and classmates to call you out if they see you violating the policy. Violations will result in points being deducted from your participation grade. The first offense will result in half of your semester’s participation points being lost. The second will result in losing your entire participation grade for the semester.*

**The “Quality Control” Policy**

You are media practitioners, and as such, I expect that you will write and present yourself with great professionalism because that is what you have been trained and educated to do. Therefore, your course assignments and presentations will be scrutinized for their vernacular and presentation. Assignment submissions must grammatically correct and free from spelling errors.

**Assignments and Grades Policies**

**Submission Requirements:** Every assignment you submit to me MUST be typed, double-spaced with 1-

inch margins, using 12 pt. font and submitted as a Word Doc. Acceptable citation styles for this course   
  
are APA or MLA – if at any point in your work you use information from other sources you must cite it both in the text and with a properly formatted reference list. Not following these specific instructions will result in a loss of points on the assignment.

**Tests and in-class assignments:** Unless you have a legitimate, documented excuse, there will be no make-ups for in-class assignments or tests and no extra time given if arriving to class late. A make-up assignment or test must be done within the week following the original date and it is your responsibility to set up an appointment with me.

**Grade Questions/Challenges:** ​If you have concerns about a grade, please inform me via email. I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Please outline your concerns and provide evidence to support your claim. You have two weeks to challenge a grade after it has been posted on Sakai (this does not apply to grades posted during finals). NOTE: I do not discuss grades over email. So, after you contact me about a grade I will set-up a time to meet with me in person so we can discuss the grade. I do this to protect your grade information.

**Extra Credit Policy:** It’s unlikely you will receive any extra credit opportunities in this course. In the rare and unlikely event that they occur, they will be class-wide, so please don’t ask for individual extra credit assignments.

**HONOR CODE**  
The Honor Code (<https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>) forms a bond of trust among students, faculty, and administrators. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill operates under a system of self-governance, as students are responsible for governing themselves. As such, our University is transformed into a powerful community of inquiry and learning. The Honor Code embodies the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, and governs the performance of all academic work a student conducts at the University. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Carolina presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in our century-old tradition of honor and integrity.

**SEEKING HELP**  
If you need individual assistance, it is 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.

**DIVERSITY**  
The University’s policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined on the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office’s webpage (<https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/>). UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**  
If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor   
  
know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Resources & Services site at <https://ars.unc.edu/>.

**ACCREDITATION**  
The Hussman School of Journalism and Media’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: <http://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas.  
**ASSIGNMENTS (grading rubrics will be provided)**

**Class Participation – (10% of total grade)**We will have numerous guest speakers (both in-person and via FaceTime/Zoom) throughout the semester. Speakers will include MJ-School alums, experts and industry leaders presenting on topics such as corporate etiquette, freelance work, working for an agency vs working in-house, entrepreneurship, brand awareness, public speaking, human resources, etc. You will be required to submit **three takeaways** from each speaker – these will be **due before the following class**. These must be written in paragraph form and submitted via Sakai. Late submissions will be counted off by 50%. Submissions later than 48 hours will **NOT** be counted.

Your participation grade will be based on your takeaways, how active of a participant you’ve been with guest speakers (by asking questions and making comments), and participation in in-class exercises. You may also have other assignments included as part of your participation grade as the semester goes on.

*Note: If you miss a class that had a guest speaker, you must reach out and send me a recent article related to a career that you’re interested with a paragraph summarizing 3 takeaways from it. It is up to you to do this before the next class if you still want credit.*

**Your First Personal Branding Statements and Headshots – (5% of total grade)**The one question (and first question) that you can count on being asked in an interview is “tell me a little bit about yourself.” This will be your first step in learning how to ace your answer!

You will partner with at least one of your classmates and record each other’s answer to “tell me a little bit about yourself.” These must be 1-take recordings, meaning that you only get one shot and can’t re-record (since you will only get one chance to answer it in an interview). You must also shoot headshots for each other and submit them (along with your personal branding statements) via Sakai. It doesn’t matter if you’ve taken professional headshots before, you are required to do new ones.

**“The beginning of the end” – (10% of total grade)**  
This will be a 2-3-page written piece chronicling your starting point in this career prep process. It must address the following: your career goals and life aspirations; what you’ve learned in your majors and minors to this point and how you’ll apply it to your first job/career – your confidence in conveying these things to future employers both on paper and in person; your career research/job search details to this point; a mini personal SWOT analysis as it relates to your career qualifications (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats – write about a paragraph about each or make a bulleted   
  
list); and mention 1-2 mentors (could be professors/employers/family members) who’ve had the biggest impact (and why) and how you anticipate them helping you get started with your career, etc. *These must be concise, free from fluff and grammatical/spelling errors.* ***I WILL NOT READ BEYOND THE 3RD PAGE.***

**Networking Assignment – (20% of total grade)**  
Each student must conduct six informational Interviews (two must be with a “Hussman” School graduate, two must be with a UNC professor and the last two must be with a professional working in their desired career industry) and attend a networking event for the class later in the semester. The interview details and grading rubric will be provided.  
 **Midterm Exam – (25% of total grade)**  
This midterm exam will be a test of everything learned from the book, lectures and guest speakers to that point.

**Your Final Portfolio/Interview – (30% of total grade)**  
This will function as your final exam and be the ultimate test of what you’ve learned throughout the course. Your portfolio will include your polished resume and cover letter (both tailored for a specific company/position), updated LinkedIn profile and professional headshot (based on specific criteria). Then, each student must meet with me for a formal interview in which you’ll make your new and improved personal branding statement; answer one of a possible three interview questions (the three questions will be provided in advance but the one you must answer will be randomly selected when you arrive); and answer a follow-up interview question which I will select based off your earlier responses (these will be different for each student). And, you must be **dressed to impress**!

These sessions will be recorded in our school’s professional studio and compared to your initial recorded statements which will demonstrate how much you’ve improved.

**TOTAL SEMESTER GRADING BREAKDOWN**  
Class Participation – **10%**  
First Personal Branding Statements/headshots – **5%**  
Beginning of the End Paper – **10%**  
Networking Assignment – **20%**  
Midterm – **25%**Your Final Portfolio and Interview – **30%  
Total = 100%**

Grading guidelines Dec be found here: http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/procedures1.html#grading.

Grades are **EARNED**, not given, and **“A” grades are reserved for truly exceptional performances.** Grades follow a typical pattern: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66 and F = below 63.

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (*This tentative schedule is subject to change)*Guest speakers listed below will be industry professionals, MJ-School alums and professors. They will offer advice and speak about their experiences/issues we’re covering during that week. **January**  
9 - Class intro; ***read Chapters 1&2***

14 - Lecture on Self-assessment/Chapters 1 and 2; ***First Personal Branding Statement Videos and Headshots Due (5%)***16 - Mastering the Art of Networking; Conducting informational interviews (Intro to Networking Assignment)

21 - **Guest speaker: Gary Kayye**; ***Beginning of the End Papers (10%) Due; read Chapters 3 and 4***  
23 **-** Lecture on Chapters 3 and 4; ***read Chapters 8-9***

28 **– Guest Speaker: Dorothy Howard’s Resume, Cover Letter and Interview Prep Workshop**30 – Lecture on Chapters 8-9 with additional tips/guidelines for resumes, cover letters and LinkedIn  
**February**  
4 – **Guest Speaker: Tom Contilliano, Chief of Client Relations at Bloomberg (Meet in Freedom Forum)**  
6 - In-class resume exercise; Read Chapter 5

11 – Lecture on Chapter 5 13 – In-class LinkedIn exercise; ***Read Chapter 6***  
  
18 – Lecture on Chapter 6  
20 – In-class cover letter exercise  
  
25 – **Guest Speaker: TBA**   
27 – **Midterm Exam Review Session;** Networking Assignment check-in

**March**  
3 – **Midterm Exam (25%)**  
5 – Preparing for Personal Branding Statements/Interview Questions/Final Portfolios

**SPRING BREAK**  
17 – Possible Networking Event; Networking Assignment check-in  
19 – **Guest speaker: TBA**  
  
24 - Ways to improve your skills – exploring graduate programs, internships and fellowships/certificates/digital training programs and videos – LinkedIn Educational videos;  
26 – **Guest Speaker:** **TBA**  
  
31 – In-class Personal Branding Statement Exercise**; Networking assignment due (20%)**  
  
**April**  
2 – In-class Personal Branding Statement Exercise/Part 2;

**7 - Personal Branding Statements and Interviews  
9 - Personal Branding Statements and Interviews  
  
14 – Personal Branding Statements and Interviews  
16 – Personal Branding Statements and Interviews; *read Chapters 10 and 11***  
  
21 – Lecture on Corporate etiquette and Chapters 10-11**; *Final Portfolios Due (30%)***23 – **Guest Speaker: TBA**  
 **FINAL EXAM SESSION** – Course Review: ***Friday, May 1st at 12:00***