

**MEJO 490.1 Cause Communications:  
Public Relations Strategies for Nonprofit Organizations FALL 2019**  
School of Media and Journalism  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Class Days and Time: T/Th 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Classroom: Reese News Lab CA 11

Instructor: Marshéle Carter

Contact: [marshele@live.unc.edu](mailto:marshele@live.unc.edu) or 919-800-8002 (text or call)

Office Hours: T/Th 3:45-5 p.m. and by appointment

Office: CA 214

**Course Designation:**

This is a service-learning and public relations-intensive, conceptual course.

**Course Description:**

*Cause Communications* provides a comprehensive understanding of the role of public relations in the nonprofit realm and a service-learning experience. The course introduces students to the essential skills and core responsibilities of practicing public relations for the public good.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Describe the nonprofit business model and its purpose and role in the marketplace
- Describe the role of internal and external communications in the nonprofit sector
- Conduct research about issues and identify problems and opportunities that nonprofit organizations face today
- Establish mission-focused goals and objectives that address nonprofit organizational weaknesses and strengths
- Discuss current trends in today's nonprofit causes and challenges
- Demonstrate understanding of nonprofit governance and staffing
- Describe best practices for nonprofit communication at the organizational, identity and experiential levels
- Demonstrate increased proficiency in nonprofit storytelling skills that raise awareness and funds
- Demonstrate increased understanding of traditional and non-traditional fundraising strategies for nonprofit organizations
- Apply course content to a service-learning experience by creating, planning, implementing and evaluating a student-run, educational, community event that is focused on effective, nonprofit communication for local nonprofit organizations and presented in partnership with an APPLES client

- Present a pre-professional, engaging and interactive team workshop and materials at the community educational event that offers creative, timely communication counsel and solutions for event participants
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of how results of communication efforts are measured, evaluated and reported to nonprofit stakeholders
- Prepare for entry-level employment in the public sector

### **Course Approach:**

This is a service-learning course. Service-learning is defined as a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students (1) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (2) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

You will accomplish and apply all of the learning objectives in this course by completing a service-learning project in partnership with our community partner, YouthWorx on Main, in Carrboro, N.C. This experience is a mutual exchange of knowledge, information and service between YouthWorx on Main and each of you.

Student teams will design, create content, promote, facilitate and present a one-day, educational event and related materials for local, nonprofit organizations Thursday, November 21, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (hours subject to change) at YouthWorx on Main.

### **APPLES Community Partner Description:**

YouthWorx on Main, a youth-serving, nonprofit collaborative powered by the [PTA Thrift Shop](#) and [Youth Forward](#), builds capacity for Triangle organizations through collaboration. YouthWorx is a catalyst for impact, equipping nonprofits with best practices that improve the lives of under-served youth in the Triangle region of North Carolina.

### **Required Text Books:**

1. ***Brandraising: How Nonprofits Raise Visibility and Money through Smart Communications***, by Sarah Durham (Jossey-Bass, 2010)
2. ***The Storytelling Non-profit: A Practical Guide to Telling Stories That Raise Money and Awareness***, by Vanessa Chase Lockshin (Lockshin Consulting, Inc., 2016)
3. ***Talk Like Ted***, by Carmine Gallo (St. Martin's Press, 2014)

**Computer Supplies:** Bring your laptop to class. All work should be saved to an external drive, your own laptop or your email and not to any lab desktop hard drive (it gets dumped regularly). Murphy's law is alive and well in computer labs, and snafus do occur. Save early and often – I can't resurrect lost documents!

**Phones (calls, texts, games and browsing), Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram** and all other social networking activity on any device will not be tolerated in class unless the platform is part of the day's lesson plan. **You will**

**receive only ONE warning.** Any following incident will result in points lost for the day's assignment. Please silence your phones and close all social media before class begins.

**Reference Materials:** Use of reference materials – dictionary, thesaurus to double-check accuracy—is encouraged. These materials are available in the classroom and in the Park Library.

**News Content:** Keep up with current events! It's important to know what's going on in the world, and what issues your clients (today and in the future) face or will face. This makes you a more effective PR practitioner!

**Assignments and Deadlines:** All writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced and turned in on time. For outside assignments, late papers will receive a reduced grade **unless you and I agree before the assignment is due** that it can be late. Otherwise the assignment will receive a 0 (zero). No assignment will be accepted if it is turned in more than 24 hours after its deadline without prior notice by you and confirmation by me.

**Sakai:** All PowerPoint slide presentations and important handouts are/will be posted on Sakai for your convenience. Please see the Resources link. Please consult these materials to ensure that you produce quality communication tools in this class. This syllabus is also filed under the Syllabus tab, and assignments will be posted in the Assignments folder.

**Exams:** You will have a midterm exam and a final exam. Your midterm exam consists of a written team workshop topic proposal and a team presentation/pitch to a panel of faculty/professionals in class. Your final exam consists of your team workshop presentation at the community educational event (grading rubric will be provided) in combination with the satisfactory fulfillment of your general, event-planning responsibilities and obligations, all of which will be evaluated by your instructor, the APPLS client, and your peers. Grading rubrics will be provided for your midterm and final exams as guides for your preparation.

**Course Grade Calculation:** I will calculate your final grade as follows:

Interview a Nonprofit Pro	10%	Midterm exam	20%
Client Research Exercise	10%	Final exam	25%
Quizzes	15%	Participation (in-class)	10%
		Participation (S/L teams)	10%

Grading Scale:	A = 94-100	B = 84-86	C = 74-76	F = below 60
	A- = 90-93	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73	
	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D = 60-69	

***I follow the University's Grading Standards:***

"A" students do not miss classes during the semester. They read and critically engage all the assigned textbook chapters and any optional readings on reserve before the material is covered in class. Written assignments and exams are not only complete but cover more than just the minimum requirements. The assignments exhibit proper style and format, are well organized, integrate strategic planning and targeting, and are written precisely and concisely. All materials are turned in on time or early, and all rewrite opportunities are used. These students keep up with current events.

"B" students miss one or two classes during the semester, but these are excused absences. They usually read the assigned textbook chapters and some of the optional readings on reserve in the library before the material is covered in class. Written assignments and exams usually exhibit proper style and formatting, integrate strategic planning and targeting, are well organized, and are written precisely and concisely. All materials are turned in on time, and all rewrite opportunities are used. These students tend to keep up with current events.

"C" students miss one or two classes during the semester, usually excused. They read the assigned textbook chapters and some of the optional readings on reserve in the library just before the material is covered on the exam. Written assignments and exams usually exhibit proper style and formatting, but they do not always integrate strategic planning and targeting and are not always well organized or written precisely and concisely. All materials are turned in on time, and most rewrite opportunities are used. These students sometimes keep up with current events.

"D" students miss three or more classes during the semester and skim assigned readings. Written assignments and exams usually exhibit proper style and formatting, but they often lack integrated strategic planning and targeting and are often not well organized or written precisely and concisely. Materials are not always turned in on time; only some rewrite opportunities are used. They don't keep up with current events.

"F" students fail to come to class on a regular basis. They miss exams and written assignments and fail to use rewrite opportunities.

**Attendance:** Regular, on-time class attendance is your obligation, and you are responsible for all work, including tests and written work, for all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any given number of class meetings. An unexcused absence will result in a 0 for that day's assignment.

**Absences:** You may make up work you missed **if an absence is pre-approved or explained by appropriate documentation from a health professional.** It will be easier to obtain permission than forgiveness.

**Honor Code:** It is expected that each student in this class will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University 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. If you haven't read the code in a while, please revisit it!

**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 family or personal hardship, disability or illness.

**Diversity:**

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. 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 Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

**The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)** requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- 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;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**MEJO 490.1 Cause Communications  
Course Calendar Fall 2019**

**(Dates are subject to change and will be announced timely.)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Homework Due</b>
<b>Aug 20</b>	<b>Welcome!</b>	
<b>Aug 22</b>	<b>APPLES Orientation and Client Research</b>	Read: APPLES Site Explore: Life Cycle of an Exempt Organization Follow: Youthworx on Main, Philanthropy Journal and your three favorite NPs
<b>Aug 27</b>	<b>Client Introduction and Orientation</b>	
<b>Aug 29</b>	<b>Service-learning Component Overview Team Assignments</b>	
<b>Sept 3</b>	<b>The Nonprofit Business Model</b>	Brandraising Ch 1
<b>Sept 5</b>	<b>Event Planning Basics and Insights</b>	Brandraising Ch 2 Storytelling 1 & 2
<b>Sept 10</b>	<b>The Why: Trends in Nonprofit Causes and Today's Top Nonprofit Challenges</b>	<b>Client Research Due</b>
<b>Sept 12</b>	<b>Nonprofit Governance and Human Resources The Who of Strategic Nonprofit Communications</b>	Storytelling 3 & 4
<b>Sept 17</b>	<b>The How: Organizational Level – Mission and Vision</b>	Brandraising Ch 3 & 4
<b>Sept 19</b>	<b>The How: Identity Level- Corporate Identity, Key Messages</b>	Brandraising Ch 5 Storytelling 5
<b>Sept 24</b>	<b>The Perfect Pitch</b>	
<b>Sept 26</b>	<b>Finding and Developing NP Stories In-class Reflection Writing and Team Time</b>	Storytelling 7 & 8
<b>Oct 1</b>	<b>The PR Toolkit, The How: Experiential Level – In Print and In Person</b>	Brandraising 6 Storytelling 9
<b>Oct 3</b>	<b>Experiential Level Case Studies –</b>	<b>Interview a Nonprofit Pro Assignment Due</b>
<b>Oct 8</b>	<b>The PR Toolkit, The How: Experiential Level – On Air and Online</b>	Brandraising 6 & 7 Storytelling 10
<b>Oct 10</b>	<b>Experiential Level Case Studies-</b>	
<b>Oct 15</b>	<b>Midterms</b>	
<b>Oct 17</b>	<b>Fall Break Oct. 17-20</b>	Enjoy!

<b>Oct 22</b>	<b>Content Marketing for Nonprofits</b>	
<b>Oct 24</b>	<b>“The Storytelling Nonprofit” Creating and Implementing a Storytelling Plan</b>	Storytelling 6
<b>Oct 29</b>	<b>Fundraising Strategies 1: Traditional Methods</b>	
<b>Oct 31</b>	<b>Fundraising Strategies 2: Creative Campaigns</b>	
<b>Nov 5</b>	<b>Team Work Day</b>	
<b>Nov 7</b>	<b>Fundraising Strategies 3: Cause Partnerships</b>	
<b>Nov 12</b>	<b>Team Work Day</b>	
<b>Nov 14</b>	<b>Measurement, Evaluation and Reporting Results to Nonprofit Stakeholders</b>	
<b>Nov 19</b>	<b>Event Rundown, Roundtable and Rehearsals</b>	
<b>Nov 21</b>	<b>Community Educational Event 9 a.m.-2 p.m.</b>	
<b>Nov 26</b>	<b>The Outlook for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nonprofits Resources for Aspiring NP Professionals Teams Debrief</b>	
<b>Nov 28</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break -no class</b>	Enjoy!
<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>LDOC! Event Evaluation and Debrief with Client</b>	Peer Evaluations Due Course Evaluations Due
<b>Dec 12</b>	<b>Final Exam - 12-3 p.m.</b>	