

## **MEJO 530-001 – GREEN BRAND LAB | SPRING 2021**

**UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media**  
**3 Credits | Monday, 2 p.m.–4:45 a.m. | Remote**

### **INSTRUCTOR**

Lisa Villamil  
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### **OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesdays from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. or by appointment | Meetings via Zoom or phone  
Wednesday from 1a.m. – 2 p.m. or by appointment | Meetings via Zoom or phone

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Development and design of creative strategies for green products and good services. Students innovate environmentally sustainable products, services and processes that lead to brand loyalty and positive impact. Triple bottom line: social, ecological, and financial strategies, brand development, advocacy communications, research, data, and storytelling come together to make the world a better place. Prerequisite or co-requisite: MEJO 433 UX Strategy or MEJO 340 Visual Design or equivalent experience. This course fulfills UNC Experiential Ed (EE) requirements.

### **APPROACH**

The Green Brand Lab explores the growing influence of design and creative strategy as a powerful process for human-centered activity, social innovation, and management. In this course students investigate how designers and product developers are becoming integrated into companies and organizations across the globe. Design brings holistic problem-solving, deep creativity and a time-honored collaborative process. Green Designers helps brands and organizations develop socially and environmentally responsible products, services, and systems that are economically viable, socially responsible and environmentally friendly.

The Green Brand Lab is highly participatory and structured as an open studio. Individual work or collaboration is encouraged. Partnerships with other courses or real-world companies and organizations are supported. A variety of media and methodologies will be used including design research, applied theory, design thinking, service design, systems thinking, and social consciousness.

The exploratory nature of this course encourages diverse opinions. This course is a catalyst for open and free thinking with the intention of learning to express opinions and ideas within an environment of respect and shared purpose. Indeed, the ability to listen, evaluate, and reevaluate ideas is a central lesson of the Green Brand Lab.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Understand social innovation as a field of study.
- Explore how societal issues arise from within social and cultural systems.
- Investigate societal issues and challenges using various design theories and system models.
- Understand power flow in systems and relationships.
- Use systems thinking, design thinking, research and ethnographic techniques to help develop innovative approaches where established solutions have failed.
- Compare how brand is developed in governmental, non-profit and corporate organizations.
- Analyze how sustainability is environmentally, socially and financially responsible.
- Be a changemaker by redesigning and designing new communication platforms and channels, products, services, and systems that benefit the world.

## ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION POLICY

As an online class, the frequency and quality of your interaction is key to a successful learning experience. You should be participating in the course throughout the week in some way or another. There will be a mix of ways to participate from joining class to a virtual discussion to working on a project alone or with a team. This online course is largely asynchronous with some required synchronous meetings. While this course does have an official participation policy as outlined in a grading rubric, please note that I will be flexible regarding deadlines for students who are experiencing illness or other challenges related to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Please contact me as early as possible if you think you may not be able to complete an assignment or participate in course activities.

## CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Weekly curriculum will consist of a video lecture, discussion and production of multipart design projects. Students should plan on spending a generous amount of time completing textbook and online readings, tutorials and projects. You are expected to organize your week's work, to attend class or later watch the video lecture, read weekly directions and materials on Sakai, and to complete weekly assignments related to larger projects you will be producing. *Video lectures are available for 90 days on the Sakai site.* You are expected to let me know if you have questions or run into problems for one reason or another by emailing me or attending an online office hour session.

## TEXTBOOKS (required)

### Required Lean Impact (2019)

Ann Mei Chang  
Wiley  
ISBN-978-1119506607

### Required Let My People Go Surfing (2016)

Yvon Chouinard  
Penguin Books  
ISBN- 014310967

## TUTORIALS (required / free and online)

LinkedIn Learning / A subscription is free to UNC students. <https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/>

## SOFTWARE (required / free and online)

This course uses several applications and services from the Adobe Creative Cloud. UNC Chapel Hill provides students with a free subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud. Directions for accessing Adobe CC and the required UNC Virtual Private Network (VPN) are provided on the Sakai course site.

## REMOTE LEARNING SOFTWARE (required / free and online)

As a remote learning course we will use Zoom for video, class gatherings and one-on-one meetings. You can connect to the UNC Zoom network here <https://zoom.us/> using your UNC Tar Heel email address.

## Additional Course Materials

Wireless mouse, notebook or sketchbook, back-up system for project files such as the free UNC Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, or an external hard drive.

## DETERMINATION OF GRADE

You will be given a rubric for each category. All grades are posted on the course Sakai site with 24/7 access.

<b>Engagement</b>	Class, posts, talking and listening	10%
<b>Studies</b>	Social innovation approaches and models	20%
<b>Paper</b>	Social problem analysis	20%
<b>Project</b>	Social innovation challenge	50%
		<hr/> 100%

## GRADING SCALE

A+ = 98–100

A = 95–97

A- = 92–94

B+ = 88–91

B = 85–87

B- = 81–84

C+ = 78–80

C = 75–77

C- = 71–74

D+ = 68–70 \*

D = 65–67

F = 64 and below

\* A semester grade below a C- requires repeating this course to earn credit.

## EXPLANATION OF COURSE LETTER GRADES\*

A Excellent: Mastery performance that is above and beyond (original)

B Strong: Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment (competent)

C Adequate: An acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment (solid)

D Marginal: Performance demonstrating a minimal passing level (weak)

F Fail: For whatever reason, an extremely poor performance (unacceptable)

\* For more information about grades see [UNC Grade Definitions](#).

## EXPLANATION OF DESIGN GRADING AND FEEDBACK

Your grade will be based on objective and subjective criteria as is the standard in creative arts and in professional practice where your work will be evaluated by clients and supervisors of differing backgrounds.

To help you develop as a designer and creative strategist, I use a grading rubric that helps you understand your strengths and weaknesses. In class, you will receive ongoing feedback and evaluation during the design-making process and through online class critiques. Feedback takes the form of instructor/student conversations, peer critiques, class critiques, and grading comments. I cannot stress enough the importance of verbal and written class discussions. I recommend you listen carefully and write notes in your sketchbook to accelerate learning.

## HONOR CODE

I expect all students to work 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 UNC demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. Using stock art or premade design elements is not permitted unless you have talked with me first. Using design apps for class projects instead of Adobe professional software is not permitted unless you have talked with me first. 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 Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## SEEKING HELP

We live in complicated times. If you need individual assistance, it is your responsibility to let me know and to allow me to help you. 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 in the 2011-2012 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 Department of Disability Services website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/>

## **ACCREDITATION**

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication'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.

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. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the highlighted "Professional values and competencies".

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. 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.**

## **SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1** | January 18 | **No class (MLK)**

**WEEK 2** | January 25 | Social innovation

**WEEK 3** | February 1 | Design thinking

**WEEK 4** | February 8 | Nonlinear and analytical thinking

**WEEK 5** | February 15 | **No class (Wellness break)**

**WEEK 6** | February 22 | Systems thinking

**WEEK 7** | March 1 | Power flow

**WEEK 8** | March 8 | Framing for understanding

**WEEK 9** | March 15 | People, planet, profits

**WEEK 10** | March 22 | Partnerships and stakeholders

**WEEK 11** | March 29 | Sustainability strategies

**WEEK 12** | April 5 | Sustainability models

**WEEK 13** | April 12 | Brand promise

**WEEK 14** | April 19 | Brand authenticity

**WEEK 15** | April 26 | Balance

**WEEK 16** | May 3 | Seventh generation

*Last day of classes: Wednesday, May 5, 2021*

**FINAL EXAM: Friday, May 7, 2021 at 4 p.m. (Online and mandatory)**