



# HUSSMAN SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

Fall 2023 – MEJO 544.1: Career Exploration and Preparation

Tuesday & Thursday – 12:30pm - 1:45pm

**Instructor:** Livis James Freeman, Jr.

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**Phone:** 919.389.3486

**Office:** 226

**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Classroom:** Curtis Media Center, rm 201/202

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## Syllabus Changes

*As your professor, I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.*

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is for **seniors only** and by the time you're eligible to take it, you should have already taken most 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 minimizing the stress from the job search process by helping you maximize mentor relationships, become more effective networkers, and understand all available resources.

### This semester, you will:

- (1) do a self-evaluation to help determine your skills, strengths, qualifications, motivations and passions
- (2) learn the chaos theory and butterfly effect and understand how they influence your career choices
- (3) be introduced to resources to assist your job search; learn ways to cope with job search stress
- (4) perfect your portfolios/resumes/cover letters/LinkedIn profile/writing samples
- (5) become master networkers and better understand your job hunt competition
- (6) perfect your interview skills; including learning some basic improv techniques 😊
- (7) learn additional career success skills such as how to "dress for success", corporate etiquette, basic personal finance and contract negotiation tips

### 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>). Additional resources will be provided throughout the semester.

### Canvas/Email:

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

## COURSE POLICIES

### ATTENDANCE:

Attendance for classes is **essential**. Just as professionals in the real-world go to work each day, you as students in our professional school are expected to come to class on time and be prepared to work.



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## University Policy:

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

## Class Policy:

I will take attendance for every class. *It is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner (within 24 hours) if you are experiencing issues that fall outside of university guidelines that might cause you to miss a class.*

**Unexcused absences will result in your final grade being lowered. The more classes you miss, the lower your grade will be.** If you must miss class, excused or unexcused, it is also 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.

## 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 be grammatically correct and free from spelling errors.**

## Assignments and Grades Policies

**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.

## Graduate Students

Graduate students enrolled in this course will be held to a higher standard and required to complete at least one additional assignment. **Each graduate student must set up a meeting with me to discuss the assignment.** Grading for graduate students will be done according to the HPLF grading scale (High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Fail).

## HONOR CODE:

I expect that each student 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 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 Julie Dixon, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## ARS

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email [ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu).



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## COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

To initiate services with the Hussman Embedded Counselor, Carolyn Ebeling, email them at [cebeling@email.unc.edu](mailto:cebeling@email.unc.edu) to schedule. Carolyn meets with students by appointment only and works exclusively with Hussman students. Available services include an initial assessment of needs, individualized planning for reported concerns, initiating engagement in brief therapy, connection to group therapy services, medication management, and referral coordination. Services are offered both in-person and by telehealth. Same-day, walk-in services are available at CAPS (3rd floor, Campus Health) Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM. For crisis or 24/7 support, call CAPS at 919-966-3658 or call/text 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

## TITLE IX

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – [titleixcoordinator@unc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu); confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu).

## POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu)) or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office, or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

## DIVERSITY STATEMENT

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on prohibiting harassment and discrimination. In summary, 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. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

## 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 – (15% of total grade)

Your participation grade will be based on specific assignments (outlined below), guest speaker takeaways, how



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active of a participant you've been in class/with guest speakers (by asking questions and making comments), having your camera turned on during virtual guest speaker sessions, and participation in in-class workshops/exercises.

We will have numerous guest speakers throughout the semester. Speakers will include J-School alums, hiring managers, industry experts and leaders presenting on various topics. You must submit **three takeaways** from each speaker and explain why they stood out – these will be **due before the following class. These must be detailed, error-free, written in paragraph form** and submitted via Canvas. I will provide an example. Be cognizant of what you write because I'll compile a list/document with all takeaways for a study guide at the end of the semester for your final exam. **(Late or missing submissions will result in your participation grade being lowered.)**

## **Your First Personal Branding Statements – (Part of “Participation” 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 must get someone to record your answer to the question “tell me a little bit about yourself.” There is no time limit and no guidelines/instructions other than that 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 or say it to someone when networking). If you mess up, just keep talking through it and DO NOT start over. Don't worry, these will not be graded for content or structure - I just want to see what you're starting off with and let you see how far you will have grown by the time you make your final polished statement at the end of the semester. *Upload your video to YouTube and submit them via Canvas. **Do NOT use YouTube Shorts to film these.***

## **“The beginning of the end” – (Part of “Participation” grade)**

This will be a written piece (1 page) chronicling your starting point in this career prep process. It must address the following: mention your career goals and life aspirations; what you've learned in your majors/minors to this point that can help with your future career (1-2 things); include a mini-personal SWOT analysis (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats) as it relates to your career qualifications (make a bulleted list – 2-3 things per section); and mention 1 mentor (could be a professor/employer/family member) who've had the biggest impact (and why). Last, but not least, summarize it by talking about your current level of stress related to your job search/career plans and explain why.

## **Increasing LinkedIn Connections (Part of “Participation” grade)**

You must increase your number of LinkedIn connections by 100 by the end of the semester (it doesn't matter what your starting number of connections is)

## **Resume, LinkedIn, and Cover Letter Assignment, Writing Sample – (30% of total grade)**

You'll submit a polished resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile and writing sample (personal press release) aimed at a specific company you'd like to work for. I will provide a grading rubric with requirements.

## **Networking Assignment: 2 Parts – (10% of total grade)**

**Part 1:** You must create a networking spreadsheet and list 15 companies you're interested in working at/with or learning more about.

**Part 2:** You must conduct 2 informational Interviews with either UNC/Hussman graduates, professionals working in your desired career industry or UNC professors. Provide detailed summaries (at least 1 page each) for each interview. I will provide a grading rubric for both parts.

## **The Interview – (30% of total grade)**

Students will interview and be interviewed by a fellow student via Zoom. You'll start by making your new and improved personal branding statement. Then, you'll answer a series of questions. Even though these will be mock interviews done via Zoom, I expect you to be **dressed to impress** and treat these as if they're the real thing. These



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will be recorded.

## Final Exam – (15% of total grade)

Your final exam will be the ultimate test of what you've learned throughout the course. It will be multiple choice and true/false.

## TOTAL SEMESTER GRADING BREAKDOWN

Class Participation – **15%**

Resume, LinkedIn, Cover Letter Assignment, Writing Sample – **30%**

Your Mock Interview – **30%**

Networking Assignment – **10%**

Final Exam – **15%**

**Total = 100%**

Grading guidelines can be found here: <https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/>. 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*)

\*Please see [UNC academic calendar](#) for the official university schedule.

### August

22 - Class intro/Lecture on Self-assessment; ***Read Chapters 1-2; Shoot personal branding statement video and check number of LinkedIn Profile contacts***

24 – Lecture on Chapters 1-2; ***Due: First Personal Branding Statement Videos and number of LinkedIn contacts (how many you currently have)***

29 – LinkedIn and Personal Branding Statements; ***Work on Beginning of the End papers***

31 – Guest Speaker – Anissa Deol – Hussman Grad and Production Assistant at ESPN -

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephflores/>

***DUE: Beginning of the End Paper due on Friday, Sept 1st***

### September

5 – **(NO CLASS – WELLNESS DAY)**

7 – Lecture on Mastering the Art of Networking; Conducting informational interviews (Intro to Networking Assignment); ***Read Chapters 8-9***

12 – Lecture on Chapter 8 - Irresistible Resumes

14 – Lecture on Chapter 9 - Killer Cover Letters; ***Quick presentation from Carolyn Ebeling, Hussman's Embedded Counselor***

19 – Presentation from the Hussman's Career Services Department (Jay Eubank and Heather Stevens) -

<http://hussman.unc.edu/ug/studentservices/careerservices>

21 – Presentation on Press Releases and Writing Samples for Jobs: Professor Lois Boynton; ***Read Chapter 3***

26 – Guest Speaker: Angela Feng, Hussman Grad and Event Coordinator at Epic Games -

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/angelacfeng/>

28 – Lecture on Chapter 3

### October



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3 – Graduate School Presentation – what to expect – Presentation by Heidi Hennink-Kaminski – Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Studies - <http://hussman.unc.edu/directory/faculty/heidi-hennink-kaminski>

5 – Workday – Resumes, Cover Letters, LinkedIn, and Writing Sample

**(Friday, Oct 6) - ASSIGNMENT DUE - Cover letter, Resume, LinkedIn and Writing Sample**

10 – Lecture on Interview Prep; Preparing for mock interview assignment

12 – NO CLASS – UNIVERSITY DAY

17 – “Improv for Job interviews” – Presentation/Class Exercise with Professor Greg Hohn from Kenan Flagler - <https://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/faculty/directory/gregory-hohn/>

19 – FALL BREAK – NO CLASS

24 – Guest speaker – Monty Hagler – UNC Grad/President & CEO of RLF Communications -

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/monty-hagler-3281b74/>

26 – Guest speaker – Stephanie Flores – Hussman Grad and Assistant Account Executive at FleishmanHillard -

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephflores/>; Read Chapter 4

31 – Lecture on Chapter 4; Official check-in for Networking Assignment; in-class networking exercise  
**November**

2 – Guest Speaker: Maggie Greene – Hussman Grad and Assistant Account Executive at Ketchum -

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/margaret-greene/>; Read Chapters 5&6

7 – Lecture on Chapter 5

9 – Lecture on Chapter 6

**(Friday, Nov 10) - ASSIGNMENT DUE – Networking Assignment**

14 – Dress for Success Presentation by Brooks Brothers’ Kelly Fishbourne

16 – Prep for Mock Interviews

21 – **Mock Interview Assignment**

23 – (NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING)

28 – “Contract Negotiation and Employee Rights” Presentation – Evan Ringel

30 – “Personal Finance and Wealth Management” Presentation – Franklin Street Partners

**December**

5 – (LDOC) – Lecture on Corporate Etiquette

**FINAL EXAM SESSION – TBD**

Final exam times are based on the University final exam schedule. Exams are scheduled according to the day and start time of the first meeting of the course each week and held in the regularly assigned meeting room unless the instructor is otherwise notified.