

ADVERTISING CREATIVE -or- CREATIVE ADVERTISING

As you go about your day, desperate brands constantly clamor for your attention. Their ads show up on your screens, along your streets, in your favorite stores and more. People call it “ad clutter” because not many of these ads are memorable or relatable or engaging or fun or good. Not many of them are creative.

In this class, we’re going to learn what it takes to make creative advertising and then we’re going to practice doing it. We’re going to challenge ourselves to come up with the kind of work that people actually like, that sell products and get talked about. Ads you’d be proud to make.

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW AD AGENCY

This will be part class, part workshop. I’ll give talks on topics like creative strategy, copywriting, art direction, etc. and we’ll have a few guest speakers from the industry. But like a functioning creative department at a great agency, we’ll also be generating original ideas.

I expect you to:

Be brave.

Dig until you find real human truths.

Go beyond what’s obvious.

Keep going—find your well of creativity and learn how to tap into it many times over.

Present your work and get better at it each time.

Give (and take) constructive feedback.

Work together.

Try to have fun. Because if you’re doing it right, it should be fun.

COURSE INFO

Tuesday & Thursday

9:30-10:45 am

Classroom: Curtis Media Center--Rm 0301

There may be times we meet remotely on Zoom. And if you can’t attend in person, you can join in on Zoom. (Please give at least 1 hour notice by email.)

Office hours are by appointment. Just reach out and we’ll find a time.

INSTRUCTOR

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[LinkedIn](#)

REQUIRED READING:

We’re going to go with THE book on creative advertising, [Hey Whipple. Squeeze This Sixth Edition](#) by Luke Sullivan.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Stay up to date on all the best creative advertising as it comes out, along with great articles and opinions on [Muse by Clio](#). They also have a podcast called [Tagline](#) that tells the behind-the-scenes stories of some of the best campaigns of all time. We'll listen to a few particular episodes for class.

These sites are great places to find inspiration for the kind of work we're trying to do.

Award Shows: [Clio Awards](#), [One Show](#), [D&AD](#), [Cannes Lions](#), [Communication Arts](#)

Ad news sites: [Creativity](#), [Adage](#), [Adweek](#), [Campaign US](#), [Ads of the World](#)

Many references have a social media presence so an easy way to keep up is to follow them.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will provide you with exercises for looking at creative advertising from a fresh perspective. Lectures, readings, resources, and guest speakers will expose you to the conversations taking place in and about current ad agency creative departments. Assignments and projects will mimic the kind of concept work done for major brands and will give you a realistic understanding of the tools you need to be a top performer in the creative industry.

COURSE FORMAT

You will do both individual work and group work throughout the semester, giving you the chance to show your own creative approach and demonstrate your leadership in the creative process.

ASSIGNMENTS

This class is about getting the chance to stretch your creative wings. We are not going to just talk about the creative work others do, we're going to produce creative work. Every assignment will require you to be flexible and open to many possible solutions.

Each assignment will have a specific delivery format and instructions must be followed closely to avoid losing points. Pay close attention to assignment parameters. Late assignments will only be accepted with medical excuses or family emergencies. Vacations, interviews, personal time, and travel are not excuses for late work. Deadlines are part of the reality of advertising and must be observed during this course in the same manner a job would require.

Your grade will result from the following:

Project 1	10%
Project 2	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Project 3	15%
Final Project for Exam	30%
Participation & Attendance	10%

EVALUATING WORK

Creativity is subjective, and ideas about what is "good work" vary from one person to another. Grading subjective material is always challenging, so remember that this is a class about

discovering new ideas and innovative thinking. Real insight into thinking creatively will represent the highest evaluations. A sincere attempt to learn the material, timely response to assignments, and professional presentation will certainly receive a passing grade, but be prepared to be pushed beyond the obvious solutions. Improvement and progress through the semester will be taken into account. An A grade has a sense of delight and new thinking. Those participants who respond to feedback and use it to improve the work will perform better on evaluations than those who choose the safe, expected answers to each problem.

Grade	Minimum Percentage Required
A	93
A-	90
B+	87
B	83
B-	80
C+	77
C	73
C-	70
D+	67
D	63
F	62 and below

Note: I won't round up your scores. So even if you have a 92.9, you'll still get an A-.

PROJECT GRADING

Here's how project assignments will be graded including your final exam which is a group project presentation:

On time: 70% of the grade

Attention to detail (No typos
decent layout, followed instructions, etc): 10% of the grade

Thinking (Can I see your logic? Does
your work relate to the brief?): 10% of the grade

Innovation (Is your idea creative,
simple, smart, not boring, surprising, etc): 10% of the grade

MIDTERM GRADING

The Midterm exam will be a test based on the out of class reading/listening assignments.

INNOVATION

The most difficult part of doing creative work is breaking through the expected solutions. A creative brief will contain the basics on what the client needs. Finding new ways to tackle the challenges in a brief is where the innovation portion of this class occurs. You will be evaluated in every assignment on this component.

ATTENDANCE:

University Policy:

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

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:

Attendance is mandatory. As this is a class that is rooted in participation and attendance, we will require attendance. If you need to miss for any reason, please communicate with me for approval before class or within 24 hours. Excessive unexcused absences (3 classes or more) will result in a lowering of ½ of final grade (A to A- for example). Please be aware that you are bound by the [Honor Code](#) when making a request for a University approved absence.

(source: <http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/>)

If you are ill, you can attend class via Zoom. Please let me know as far in advance as possible.

Spring 2024 Course Delivery: As long as it is possible to do so safely, we will meet in person this semester. I understand the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may require changes to this plan and will be monitoring the situation closely. If I need to change the format of the course temporarily due to outbreaks of illness, I will announce this via email and the course Canvas site.

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 accommodation 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](#).

SYLLABUS CHANGES

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

THE SCHEDULE

Here's a rough outline of how things will go. Things will certainly change, and I'll update this document as they do. Plan to have a reading plus a creative assignment that will take hours a week. I wish it could be faster, but getting to the smart strategies, good ideas, clever headlines, and non-boringness takes time.

THURSDAY JANUARY 11

In class: Imposter syndrome: Giving yourself permission to look dumb
Today we'll get to know each other. We'll go over the syllabus, my expectations, the typical format of the class and answer your questions. Then we'll jump into some examples of the type of work we can aspire to.

Assignment:

- PROJECT 1: Find a bad ad to talk about during our next class.
- Listen to the [Like a Girl](#) episode of Tagline

TUESDAY JANUARY 16

In class: Agency structure: How many job titles can one place have?
We'll talk about the types of jobs in advertising and how creativity applies to each.

Assignments:

- Watch [How to Build Your Creative Confidence](#) TED Talk by David Kelley
- Read the Foreword and Chapter 1 of *Hey Whipple*

THURSDAY JANUARY 18

In-class: What's true is what's good
We'll look at how gross it feels when a brand tries to lie to us or pretend the world works in a way it doesn't. And we'll see how real human truths inspire big ideas. Then you'll share your bad ads.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 1: Find truths for the brand you shared. Don't stop at one truth—make a list of 20. Come at it many ways.
- Read Chapter 2 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY JANUARY 23

In-class: Strategy & Creative briefs: The flicker that leads to a fire
We'll go over moving from truth to strategy and some creative brief formats. Then you'll share your PROJECT 1 truths and pick 3 to lead to creative briefs.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 1: Based on your 3 truths, write 3 strategies for your brand.

- Read Chapter 3 of *Hey Whipple*
- Listen to the [The Most Interesting Man in the World](#) episode of Tagline

THURSDAY JANUARY 25

In Class: Copywriting: Words matter
We'll talk about copywriting. What does it look like when it's done right? And what are some tips and tricks to writing great headlines. You'll also present your PROJECT 1 strategies and we'll make them better and truthier together.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 1: Write at least 50 headlines based on your strategy for Thursday.
- SIDE QUEST: Using any of the online resources on the syllabus, find an example of an ad with great copywriting.
- Read Chapter 4 and 5 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY JANUARY 30

In Class: Copywriting continued
Today, you'll share your PROJECT 1 headlines and critique others. We'll also go through the examples you collected.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 1: Headline revisions and more headlines
- Read Chapter 6 of *Hey Whipple*

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1

In class: Tension: Why the bad guy is good for your ideas
Today, we'll start talking about how we get to good ideas. One way in is to find an enemy. We'll also look at your headline revisions and pick a product for PROJECT 2.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 2: Write 20 truths.
- Read Chapter 7 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 6

In class: Ideas continued: Other ways to get to big ideas
Today, we'll talk about other techniques you can use to get to big ideas. We'll also look at your PROJECT 2 truths.

Assignment:

- PROJECT 2: Write 3 strategies.
- Read Chapter 8 of *Hey Whipple*
- Read Will Benham's [The Little Brainstorm Book](#) (Follow the link on Will's page.)

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 8

In Class: SWIM
We're going to do an in class brainstorming exercise. And you'll share your PROJECT 2 strategies.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 2: Write 10 idea statements
- Read Chapter 9 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13

In Class: NO CLASS! BE WELL!

Assignment:

- Keep working on this: PROJECT 2: Write 10 idea statements
- Watch the Super Bowl ads online or during the game, be prepared to discuss your 3 favorites and 1 least favorite

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 15

In Class: Super Bowl: Obviously
What kind of ad class would we be if we didn't stop to talk about the "big game?"
We'll share our opinions based on what we've learned in class so far. Then you'll share your PROJECT 2 idea statements.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 2: Revise your idea statements
- Read Chapter 12 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20

In Class: Manifestos: Inspire us
We'll talk about manifestos and their purpose. And take a moment to choose your PROJECT 2 idea statement.

Assignments:

- PROJECT 2: Write a manifesto
- Prepare for MIDTERM EXAM

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22

In Class: MID-TERM EXAM
This will be based on the readings, podcasts, etc. assigned outside of class.

Assignments:

-Keeping working on: PROJECT 2: Write a manifesto

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27

In Class: Intro to Art Direction: Maybe words don't matter??
We'll start off by reading our manifestos to the class and critiquing them. Then we'll dive into art direction and its role in ad campaigns.

Assignment:

-PROJECT 2: Revise manifestos
-SIDE QUEST: Find an example of interesting art direction

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 29

In Class: Special Guest: Erin Stevens, Creative Director and Art Director
Erin will talk about life as an Art Director and her tips for success.

Assignment:

-PROJECT 2: Create 3 moodboards + write 10 headlines
-Read Chapter 13 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY MARCH 5

In Class: PROJECT 2 Showcase + Reset
Today, you'll present your PROJECT 2 manifesto, moodboard and headlines. You'll give and receive constructive feedback. After that, we'll form groups for PROJECT 3.

Assignment:

-Read Chapter 10 of *Hey Whipple*

THURSDAY MARCH 7

In Class: Special Guest: Chris Fedorczak, Independent Strategy Consultant
Chris will give us a strategy POV and kick us off on our brief for PROJECT 3.

Assignment:

-PROJECT 3: Write 10 idea statements

TUESDAY MARCH 12

In Class: SPRING BREAK!!

THURSDAY MARCH 14

In Class: SPRING BREAK!!

TUESDAY MARCH 19

In Class: Welcome back
Today, you'll present your PROJECT 3 idea statements and we'll hone them in class. I'll also go over a few tips and tricks for working as a creative team.

Assignment:
-PROJECT 3: Manifesto(s) and 3 moodboards

THURSDAY MARCH 21

In Class: Beyond TV: Is it an ad??
Today, you'll present your PROJECT 3 manifestos and moodboards. Then we'll talk about other kinds of advertising besides print, TV and billboards and do an in class exercise.

Assignments:
-PROJECT 3: Come up with 5 executional ideas that are not TV, print or billboards
-Read Chapter 11 and 12 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY MARCH 26

In Class: Beyond TV, into technology
You'll present your PROJECT 3 executional ideas. Then we'll keep talking about new forms of advertising and do yet another in class exercise.

Assignments:
-FINAL PROJECT: Pick a brand, bring 3-5 options
-Read Chapter 13 of *Hey Whipple*

THURSDAY MARCH 28

In Class: NO CLASS! BE WELL!

TUESDAY APRIL 2

In Class: Special Guest: Katee Hui, MBE, Senior Director, Client Strategy
Katee is going to talk to us about social impact marketing or how to do good things with advertising. We're also going to settle on your FINAL PROJECT brand.

Assignments:

-FINAL PROJECT: Write 20 truths

THURSDAY APRIL 4

In Class: Production: Less talk, more action
Today we'll talk about how an idea goes from your notebook to your parent's screens. We'll also go over your FINAL PROJECT truths and cut them down to 5.

Assignments:

-FINAL PROJECT: Write 5 strategies based on the truths
-Read Chapter 14 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY APRIL 9

In Class: Working session
Today we'll go over your FINAL PROJECT 5 strategies as a class and critique, landing on one for each group.

Assignment:

-FINAL PROJECT: Write 5 idea statements

THURSDAY APRIL 11

In Class: Special Guest: Hollie Dyer, Cultural & Content Strategist, Social Media Manager
Hollie will tell us more about her role at an agency. And we'll quickly go over your idea statements and revise as needed.

Assignment:

-FINAL PROJECT: Make any necessary adjustments to the idea statement

TUESDAY APRIL 16

In Class: Final Project official kickoff
Today we'll go over the list of executions and formats we'll want to see during your FINAL PROJECT presentations.

Assignment:

-Work on FINAL PROJECT
-Read Chapter 15 and 16 of *Hey Whipple*

THURSDAY APRIL 18

In Class: Portfolios: How to get a job in advertising
Today we'll talk about the creative form of a resume—an online portfolio. We'll

look at examples and talk about tips and best practices. Any time left in class will be a working session.

Assignment:

- Work on FINAL PROJECT
- Read Chapter 17 and 18 of *Hey Whipple*

TUESDAY APRIL 23

In Class: Potential Guest Speaker?
We may have a guest speaker today. If not, treat this as a working session where I can help groups as needed.

Assignment:

- Work on FINAL PROJECT
- Send me your favorite piece of work you did this semester.

THURSDAY APRIL 25

In Class: Wrapping things up
Today we'll briefly talk about the second half of *Hey Whipple* (Chapters 10-18), then go into a working session.

Assignment:

- Work on FINAL PROJECT

TUESDAY APRIL 30

In Class: Agency life: Getting real
We'll talk for a little bit about the pressures of agency life and what it's like out here in the real world, including red flags. The rest of our time will be a working session.

Assignment:

- Work on FINAL PROJECT

FRIDAY MAY 10 at 8 AM

In Class: The Pitch: Final Exam Presentations

Assignment:

Keep in touch!