

Course: ADV373/PR377K— Integrated Communications Campaigns
Semester: Fall 2018
Meeting: TuThu 2:00 – 3:30
Classroom: BMC 4.206
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What can you expect:

This is where you take much of what you’ve learned in the past few years and put it into practice. We won’t cover new ground here – maybe a refresher or two and certainly you’ll get my perspective on topics that may differ (often substantially) from what you’ve been taught already.

How that happens:

The class will be divided into teams, and each team will function as an independent “agency.” All teams will work on the same thing.

That “thing” is a real opportunity from an actual client. Your client this semester is FARM AID (www.farmaid.org) - an event and organization closely tied with Willie Nelson. They are seeking a refresh and reinvigoration of the brand. More details about that are in a separate brief, and much more will be forthcoming. FARM AID is based near Austin. You’ll meet the CMO who will talk about the challenge you will address. She may also help me judge your work along the way. You may meet other members of their team as well, and you will also have access to several agency professionals – friends of mine: planners, creatives, et al – to help guide and inform you.

OK; so then what happens?

This will be much like a real new business pitch, where several agencies compete for a chance to represent a client. That often happens in stages, and so it will for you. There are two main phases to the class, cleverly called Phase 1 and Phase 2. In Phase 1 you will be briefed on the opportunity, then let loose to deep dive.

You will have some good information on the current FARM AID audience, but you’ll need to be thinking about new audiences as well. You’ll need to act like planners to get into the heads of existing and potential fans. What can you learn about them that will help you craft the most relevant, effective brand story? Desk research will be done. Maybe a survey. Lots of questions to be answered.

It’ll be tough to answer those questions without getting to know the client. Who are they? I mean who are they really? What’s at the heart of their brand? Better yet, what’s the heart of their brand? You have to understand the current FARM AID story before you can even begin to craft a forward-thinking story for them. A big part of that is understanding the competitive landscape. With whom and what are they competing, for shelf space and for space in hearts and minds?

But wait; you’re just getting going. By this point you’re going to have at least an inkling of how you are going to craft a story that cracks the client’s challenge – the beginnings of a broad creative strategy culminating in the development of a creative brief. That’s where Phase 1 ends. All of that new knowledge cluttering your brain will spill out in a presentation to the client(s). Tell them what insights you’ve uncovered about their target audience(s). Tell them what that FARM AID is offering, that the audience wants, that the competition isn’t delivering. Then present your creative brief.

You’ll be graded on your presentation and your book, which is a more detailed version of the presentation and commonly called the “leave-behind.” Because you leave it behind after you present, for me to read at my leisure.

Is that it?

Not hardly. You'll get feedback. Plenty of it. Then you move onto Phase 2. Based on what you've learned so far and all of the clever ideas that have sprouted in your noggin and lay out your activation plan. How would your story come to life? How will you integrate the many storytelling options at your disposal, and where will your story best be told? You'll end Phase 2 with another presentation and another leave-behind.

So what do I do?

I'll wear several hats during the semester. Much of the time I will be acting like a new business consultant, which is a real thing (<https://www.thelistinc.com/blog/reach-top-ad-agency-search-consultants/>) and is a liaison between client and agency in pitches. They get paid by the client. Other times I'll be part of your team – a mentor, sounding board, whatever. Sometimes I'm just the guy who locks up when you're done.

But wait, there's more:

During the course of the semester, I'll be bringing in guest speakers to talk about some of the disciplines that you'll need to incorporate into your team planning. For example, a strategist might come in and talk about getting the most out of a survey, or just general best-practices. A creative director and an account director will come together to talk about their individual perspectives on creating and implementing a creative brief. Someone from the media world will drop in too. They will be valuable resources for you. And I'll cover some ground too, on things like presentation skills and writing.

I'm throwing in an individual class participation element just to keep you on your toes. Here's how that works:

Participation isn't the same thing as attendance. Participating is giving your opinion, asking questions. I feel so strongly about it that I make it part of my classes. Five or six times during the semester, sometime after class on Tuesday, I'm going to toss out to the class (via email or Canvas) a question or a problem or challenge or just something interesting I find from the branding world. It might be some intriguing new work I've seen, or news about a brand in crisis – it will vary. You'll then have until class time on Thursday to weigh in with a comment, opinion, review – some point-of-view of at least a little substance, which you will also do digitally. I want to know what you think, and why you think it. "I liked the music," won't cut it. But tell me how the particular choice of music enhanced the ad, or how the music choice distracted from the story and you'll score points with me. You aren't limited to one comment per topic, but remember, I'm looking for substance in a response, not volume.

And oh yeah, there's this:

You are about to enter a world that is much more often a team sport than an individual effort. The ability to effectively collaborate in groups, to marshal and exploit diverse points of view and personalities, to be a good leader or follower as a situation demands are all crucial to your success after graduation. Part of your grade is assessing your abilities and those of your teammates through a Peer Evaluation of the team project.

A few other things to know:

- To that end, a review of your teammates is an important element of this class.
- Don't believe the cliché. Curiosity didn't kill the cat; it made the cat smarter. You've chosen a field where curiosity is a prized characteristic. Flex your curiosity muscle.
- "Class participation" doesn't just mean showing up and paying attention, although I appreciate you doing both. I love comments, questions, opinions and any other participation from the class. I always ask for it, and rarely get as much as I want. With few exceptions, there are no dumb or wrong questions. And trust me. If you don't ask questions, I will ask you. I take note, literally, when people speak up. You may even get a little extra credit for it.
- Finally, there are selfish objectives. I want each of you to eventually find jobs in the industry and immediately start making an impact. Blow shit up. Make us better. That's good for you, but it also makes me look good. And UT as well. Everybody wins if you leave smarter than when you came in.

Evaluation:

Team Project:

Phase 1 Written	=	20%
Presentation	=	15%

	Phase 2 Written	=	25%
	Presentation	=	20%
Participation		=	10%
:			
	Team Peer Evaluation	=	10%
	Total	=	100%

Required Reading: That's a trick; there is no assigned textbook for this class. Much of what you need to know is already in your head, or soon will be after you dig into the project and let your creative muscles flex. You'll probably be doing plenty of reading though, but online. And if you really like books, pick up a copy of Perfect Pitch by Jon Steel <https://www.amazon.com/Perfect-Pitch-Selling-Winning-Business/dp/0471789763>. If you've never read Ogilvy on Advertising, first, shame on you. Second, read it. https://www.amazon.com/Ogilvy-Advertising-David/dp/039472903X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1516134170&sr=8-1&keywords=ogilvy+on+advertising. If you don't want to buy either of those books, borrow mine. Did you save your old advertising and PR texts? Those may come in handy too.

Some more important info:

- I don't grade on a curve. You get the grade you earn, and vice versa. Team grades are typically "same grade for each member" unless there are extenuating circumstances, like a team member really not doing their share. Those extenuating circumstances will more likely be recognized by you way before me. That's why the Peer Review is so important, but they can also be brought up to me directly at any time
- There is a certain degree of subjectivity in grading written assignments and presentations. What I'm looking for is not necessarily a right or wrong answer, but rather a demonstration that you can determine what information is and isn't important in forming your recommendations, being able to back up those recommendations with facts and/or well thought out opinions, and the ability to clearly and succinctly state those recommendations.
- Language is a loose and fluid thing. Sometimes formality is important, and sometimes you can (and should) be informal. But proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation are always important. At my firm, many managers and directors eliminate job candidates who have even one typo in a resume or cover letter; that's how important it is. I'm not that severe, but I tend to be a harsh editor.
- I won't be taking attendance. You're grown-ups now, and you know your responsibilities. Plus, the nature of this course is mostly teamwork oriented, so we won't even be meeting every Tuesday and Thursday. Much of the time you need to be somewhere else working, creating, researching, navel-gazing. I aim to be your mentor, not your babysitter. But when we are meeting as a class, I expect you to be there.
- Just like in the business world, some assignments are made (and completed) in person, some are done electronically. You will submit some assignments in class, and some will be done via email or Canvas. Back up all of your work digitally. But it never hurts to have a hard copy too.
- Make a habit of checking your email before class. If for any reason class has to be cancelled, I will send out an all-class email no later than 30 minutes prior the start of class
- It's perfectly fine to seek outside advice, counsel or input. In fact, it's encouraged. But the final output needs to be your original work. Breaches of UT's Standard of Academic Integrity and will be dealt with accordingly. Don't make me go all Dean Wormer on you.
- Get your work done on time. If there are extenuating circumstances, contact me as soon as possible to talk about it. Never jeopardize your safety and health by driving recklessly or being on campus at an unsafe hour in an attempt to meet a class deadline.
- I expect to see some coffee, tea, Red Bull. Eat before you get here. And pick up after yourselves.
- I promise not to take or make calls, texts or emails during class. I expect the same from you. Likewise, I want to be accessible, but use discretion. Like you, I have a life away from the classroom. Well, maybe it's not like yours, but you get the point.
- Numeric assignment scores are posted on Canvas. Final letter grades are recorded as A, B, C, D or F and available at the Office of the Registrar's "See my grades" page located at: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/grades/report>.
- As in real life, things can and do change. The schedule is tentative and can change based on client and guest availability, production schedules and unexpected opportunities. Students are responsible for changes to the course schedule as announced in class.

The legal stuff. I didn't write this, but you still need to read it:

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Mandatory Reading: All students agree to read then abide by the University of Texas at Austin's Standard of Academic Integrity and understand the nature of Academic Dishonesty as defined by UT-Austin at:
http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php and http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_what_is.php

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, a meeting, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

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Helpful people and places:

- College of Communication Instructional Media Center:

<http://communication.utexas.edu/technology/imc/>

- Fresh-ups: UT College of Communication Software Workshops:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Fresh-Ups-UT-College-of-Communication-Software-Workshops/147245465319771>

- UT Counseling and Mental Health Center, 24-Hour Telephone Counseling: 512-471-2255
- Behavioral concerns advice line: 512-232-5050
- Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222: www.uwc.utexas.edu
- Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

If stress, test anxiety, racing thoughts, feeling unmotivated or anything else is getting in your way, UT has options available for support. Our CARE

Counselor in the Moody College of Communication is: Abby Simpson, LCSW | CMA 4.134 | 512.471.7642 (leave a message if she is unavailable)

Need Immediate Help?

- Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC): M-F 8-5p | SSB, 5th floor | 512-471- 3515 | cmhc.utexas.edu
- CMHC Crisis Line: 24/7 | 512.471.2255 | cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html