**Journalism 271**

**Fall 2014**

**Copywriting and Communication-A Creative Concepting Class**

This is a course on creative concepting for advertising. It is meant to give you an understanding of how advertising creatives work and the kind of thinking required in this area of the industry. Although the course title is Copywriting and Communication, much of the focus here is on concept development and discovering the ideas that lead to compelling advertising messages.   
The course uses many examples of excellent creative advertising to help you learn two guiding principles: 1. How to establish core creative ideas; 2. How to craft the message to the core idea.

Class Meetings: 3:30-4:45 Monday & Wednesday, Carroll 283

Instructor: Dana McMahan   
Office: Carroll 238

Phone: 919-434-1229  
Twitter: @dhmcmahan

Office Hours: Monday & Wed 1:30-3:30

I am happy to see any student outside of class by appointment, as well. Please email me to schedule a time. Email: [dmcmahan@email.unc.edu](mailto:dmcmahan@email.unc.edu)

**Evaluating Work:**   
Creativity is subjective, and ideas about what is “good” 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. Those participants who respond to the push will perform better on evaluations than those who choose the safe answers to each problem. The grading rubric for assignments will always include an Innovation element.

**Grade Minimum Percentage Required**

A 93   
A- 90   
B+ 87   
B 83   
B- 80   
C+ 77   
C 73   
C- 70   
D+ 67  
D 63

D- 60

F 59 and below

**Course Objectives:**

This course will provide you with some hands-on exercises for looking at creative advertising from a fresh perspective. Lectures, readings and resources will expose you to the conversations taking place in and about current ad agency creative departments. Individual 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:**

This course is a participatory class. All lectures will be combined with class discussion about the topic. Please come to class prepared to share your views on the materials you have read, and observations you have made which are relevant to the topic.

**Assignments:**

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

**Evaluations:**

Your grade will result from the following:

Attendance and Participation (reminder: max of 3 classes can be missed) 10%

Individual Concept Assignments (4 total, averaged together) 40%

Exam 1 15%

Exam 2 15%

Final Group Project 20%

**Assignments**

All assignments will be presented professionally. Each assignment will have a specific delivery format and instructions must be followed closely to avoid losing points. Pay close attention to assignment parameters. Most assignments can be submitted online. 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.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is expected in order to participate fully in this course. You may be absent a maximum of 3 times for this class. These three absences can be for anything--illness, travel, personal time--- but beyond these 3, your grade will be lowered.

**Participation:**

This course requires your active participation. The class will include a break session where you can check in with your other responsibilities or social activities, but you are expected to direct your attention to the classwork when we are in session. Multi-tasking with other communications, whether web-based or mobile-based will reduce your grade. This is simply not an environment where you can participate fully when you are engaged with other media.

**Honor Code:**

All work should be completed in observance of the honor code. (honor.unc.edu)

**Core Values and Competencies:**This class addresses a number of core principles set forward by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC):

1. 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.

2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

5. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

7. Think critically, creatively and independently.

8. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

9. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.

10. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

11. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

12. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**Fall 2014 JOMC 271 Preliminary Schedule by Date:**

Please note: the instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary throughout the semester.

Aug 20 **Welcome to the world of Advertising Creative**

Aug 25 **Brand Experience**

Aug 27 **Brand Experience**—**Concept Assignment 1 Due**

Sept. 1 **No Class–Labor Day**

Sept. 3 **Storytelling**

Sept. 8 **Briefing\_Semester Project**

Sept. 10 **Briefing\_Semester Project**

Sept. 15 **Storytelling**

Sept. 17 **Crossing Media**—**Concept Assignment 2 Due**

Sept. 22 **Crossing Media**

Sept. 24 **Crossing Media**

Sept. 29 **Out of Class Work Session**

Oct. 1 **Out of Class Work Session**

Oct. 6 **In-Class Workday on Client Project**

Oct. 8 **In-Class Workday on Client Project**

Oct. 13 **Exam 1**

Oct. 15 **No Class—Fall Break**

Oct. 20 **Production–Concept Assignment 3 Due**

Oct. 22 **Production**

Oct. 27 **Production**

Oct. 29 **Production**

Nov. 3 **Production**

Nov. 5 **In-Class Workday on Client Project**

Nov. 10 **In-Class Workday on Client Project** **–Concept Assignment 4 Due**

Nov. 12 **In-Class Workday on Client Project**

Nov. 17 **Practice Round 1**

Nov. 19 **Practice Round 1**

Nov. 24 **Exam 2**   
 Nov. 26 **No Class–Thanksgiving Holiday**

Dec. 1 **Practice Round 1**

Dec. 3  **Practice Round 2**

Dec. 6  **4:00PM Final Exam Period**