

**Journalism 850**  
**Capstone in Marketing Communication**  
**Spring 2016**

**Syllabus**

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This course is designed to give students an opportunity to integrate and apply the skills and concepts they have developed in the School's marketing communication Master's program. Students will work in teams to identify and solve a marketing communications problem for companies or non-profit organizations. The culmination of the course is the development of a marketing communications plan and presentation of that plan to the executives/board of the relevant client organizations.

The clients this semester are:

Kansas City Area Transit Authority in KCMO.

Donnelly College in KCK.

Since each client has its own characteristics, constituencies and needs, each team will develop its deadlines and timelines as they seem appropriate. Each team must make its presentation to the client by the start of the last week of April so we can make University graduation deadlines.

Over the next several months you will develop a marketing communications plan.

**Marketing plan elements**

Executive summary: A summary of your plan.

Preliminary research question(s): Based on what you know about the client, develop a research statement that sets out what you see as the research problem and several tentative questions you want to answer with your research.

Situation analysis: Describe client, challenges client faces, environment in which client operates and why it is necessary to take action at this time. Finalize your research question(s).

Research: Secondary, primary and summary of key findings.

SWOT analysis: Identify the environment in which the client operates. It serves as bridge between research and planning, and is especially useful in identifying potential strategies for addressing the client's needs.

Planning draft: Develop a plan that identifies audiences; goals, strategies and tactics, and strategic message plans. You also will develop a budget and a timeline.

Final plan: Drawing on your findings and recommendations, you will create a Marketing Communication Plan book for the client.

Client presentation: You will present your findings and recommendations to the client by April 26. This presentation is your Final General Exam and Defense. As such, it is possible that faculty, alumni and/or clients who are present will ask questions that you will be expected to answer.

### **Course objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will have refined their research skills and will know how to develop a marketing communication plan, using the techniques outlined above, and present the final plan to a client.

### **Communication**

To simplify communication for teams and their clients, each team will have a team coordinator. In most situations, only team coordinators will communicate with clients. On Sunday of each week, the team coordinator will send me a memo that describes the team's key activities re the client for the week just completed. The first memo will be due Sunday, Jan. 24. It is difficult to know how long each memo should be but usually a few paragraphs are adequate.

### **Class meetings**

After the first regularly scheduled class meeting, the class will meet as a whole on occasion as needed. Individual teams will meet regularly depending on your client and project status. Based on past experience, your team will need to meet at least once each week and perhaps more.

### **Working as a team**

We will be working in twoteams. At approximately mid-semester, I will ask each of you to assess the contribution of each other team member to the success of the project. I will ask for another assessment at the end of the semester. Team members' assessments will play a significant role in determining your final grade.

### **Office hours**

I do not have an office at the EC. However, I would be glad to meet with you before or after your weekly team meeting. I also would be glad to visit some other time or by phone.

### **Final grade**

Your final grade will be based on your contribution to the final product of your team. There will be no other assignments, tests, etc., for this course.

## **Evaluation of your project**

You will receive a form showing how your project will be evaluated. In addition to your course instructor, your plan will be evaluated by several professionals who will attend your presentation.

## **IMPORTANT: Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification -- Adopted May 7, 2004**

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of this course.

*The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.*

### Plagiarism

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

### Fabrication and Falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

## **Special Needs**

The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620, coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.