

# Journalism 433 / Marketing 433 - IMC Competition

## Spring 2009 Combined Syllabus

Monday & Wednesday • 2:30 to 5:15 p.m. • RSJ 304

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Class group	<a href="http://groups.google.com/group/imc433">http://groups.google.com/group/imc433</a> (e-mail: <a href="mailto:imc433@googlegroups.com">imc433@googlegroups.com</a> )		

### Course Description

This course will require you to apply marketing communication knowledge and skills by solving a problem for a national client, *The Century Council*. You will research the product, market and competition, identify marketing and communication opportunities and develop traditional and non-traditional communication strategies and tactics. The class, acting as a team, will write an Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) plan and execute the creative work required to carry out that plan. The learning in this class will take you beyond the level of previous classes and put you at a professional level, simulating an Integrated Marketing Communication agency. **That means professional level work is expected.** You will work primarily in teams, and be evaluated on your individual contributions to the final team product as assessed by yourself, your peers, and faculty.

The focus of the course is to prepare an entry in the American Advertising Federation (AAF) National Student Advertising Competition. The learning experience is tailored to the two-fold goal of solving the client's problem and winning the competition. Fifty percent of the AAF competition score is based on the written plan, and 50% on the formal, live presentation at the district competition. During the course of the semester, five students will be selected to present, but all students will contribute work to the written plan and to the live presentation. **The district competition is scheduled Friday, April 17 at UC Berkeley. All of you are encouraged to attend.** The winning team in our district will be sent to the national competition, all expenses paid.

The class requires marketing and journalism students to work together to achieve a real-world business goal, the winning of an IMC competition. The AAF competition closely simulates the development of a major new business presentation in a full-service agency. Students from the two schools have received training in different disciplines needed to successfully complete the course assignment. This is a unique opportunity to learn from each other and to experience working with someone from a distinct, but related discipline.

**Within a team structure you will be required to:**

- Identify what information is needed to solve a real marketing problem,
- Discover and use effective and efficient secondary data sources,
- Conduct appropriate qualitative and quantitative primary research for the situation analysis and to test marketing communication effectiveness,
- Organize and communicate ideas in an IMC plan,
- Write a situation analysis,
- Formulate an effective advertising strategy,
- Devise an effective creative strategy,
- Develop an effective public relations and promotion strategy,
- Write, design, and produce marketing communications materials to achieve marketing objectives,
- Devise a media strategy and write a media plan,
- Demonstrate teamwork, written and oral communication skills,
- Demonstrate proficiency at self-evaluation so as to increase your personal knowledge and skill levels.

**Self-managed learning teams:** Businesses complain that many graduates do not understand the business world well, that their communication skills are ineffective, and that they are not self-starters but instead want to be told what to do and how to do it. This class will require you to address these problems. You will be responsible for your own learning so you must be self-motivated. All of the work will be accomplished through self-managed student teams, with faculty serving as coaches, facilitators and resources.

**Class communication:** With a large team, keeping up-to-date is critical. Please submit all of your work for the plan in both paper and electronic form (e.g., on a disk, via e-mail attachment) for easy inclusion into the final plan. In addition, you'll use e-mail and Google Groups for communication and building the plan files. This way the class can easily communicate and collaborate whenever needed.

**Course requirements**

- To participate, you must join the UNR chapter of AAF (\$50) and you must use e-mail.
- To be a presenter, you must be able to make both regional and national presentation dates.
- You must have an e-mail address and check it at least once a day.
- You must join the class Google Group and use it for posting files.

**Evaluation Plan - Good is not good enough**

Your grade will be based on an assessment by all three faculty. After the competition plan book has been submitted, students will receive interim grades and faculty comments based on their individual performance. This is to provide you feedback in time to address any needed improvements during the remainder of the class. It is up to you to seek the faculty for advice on how to improve your grade during the semester. In addition to faculty observation, formal input for assessment includes:

- Research memo (see the following)
- Job assignment application (see the following)
- Several required short memos – some described below and others as assigned in class
- Several peer evaluations over the semester - one will be submitted after each team assignment (Forms available near Bob's office and online.)
- Self-assessment (see the following)

**What do you need to do to get a good grade?** Attend and participate during class, produce quality work on time, present questions and ideas that move the team forward, be a good team player when conflicting ideas emerge, take a leadership role when appropriate, do your fair share of the work (**but remember it is quality, not only quantity that counts**), and maintain a winning attitude. We will also consider your personal learning over the semester. This includes demonstrating increased knowledge and skills over time. The goal of the class is to produce a very high quality plan and we hope you will win the competition. With this in mind, understand that your grade will be based, in part, on the overall quality of the team's final products: the plans book and the formal, live presentation. Each of you is expected to contribute significantly through your individual work and your work as part of the team. At the same time, the primary basis for your grade will be the quality of your individual work.

**Be sure the faculty see your work.** Faculty observation plays a significant part in your grade, so be sure you contribute in class and during meetings when faculty are present. When your comments during class show your depth of knowledge and extent of work on the topic, as well as move the discussion forward, you will be noticed as a top performer. Sometimes it is difficult to compete with strong students during class, but don't let that stop you from adding your ideas to discussions. Your contributions to the Google Group also count as class contribution, so you can use that forum to present your ideas to move the discussion forward between classes. Professionalism also means reading e-mail from the professors or your peers. Use introspection to identify your key skills and use them to differentiate yourself and enhance the team production. Become the expert in something and be sure we see it.

**Work Hard and Work Well.** To get an *A* in this course, plan to work very, very hard. Professional level work and commitment are expected. This course aims to prepare you for the rigors as well as the reality of the advertising, PR and marketing business. Expect to put in some extra nights and weekends. Always remember your final grade also depends upon the quality of the work produced.

**Be a good team member.** Individuals on teams with weak, lazy and non-productive members are forced to work harder to achieve results. The same is true of advertising agencies and marketing departments. Don't just do what's assigned and expected of you. Do more. Be helpful. Also, be human. An important part of this competition is to learn to work intelligently with others. Another important feature of being a good team member is to listen to all ideas with respect, and to yield your idea gracefully if consensus builds against it. Be strong and vocal with your ideas, provide evidence to support their value, and be part of a team that selects the best idea, regardless of who first presented it. The best brainstorming occurs when individual ideas are enhanced by the group in a non-threatening environment. **In this class we have had occasional problems with individuals not listening to others, so watch out for this problematic group dynamic.** Note that every team has many roles for its members, from leader to mediator—learn your strengths and play to them, and ask the faculty for guidance when needed.

**Reach for the stars.** Try for great originality of thought. Don't settle for hackneyed ideas or sloppy work. Encourage others to do their best. Pursue excellence in all of what you are to present. You will be presenting your final work to representatives of the client and advertising professionals. Try to convince them you belong in their company.

Yes, this course is about winning, but it is first and foremost about learning. And, it's not just about learning to compete for an account; it is also about learning how to work with others and how to recognize your own strengths and weaknesses. Grades are based on your total performance. The business world has its share of bullies, prima donnas, and people who are just plain difficult. This course

is not designed to contribute new stock to these breeds. We take off grade points for selfishness and laziness. We give credit for generosity, compassion and the extra effort you make to help one another.

At semester end, the following is the bottom line criteria when faculty assign grades:

**A = Top quality work.** To achieve this grade, your work must clearly be at a professional level in terms of the above criteria. When we review this student's work we will find it provocative, insightful and of a consistently high quality, both online and offline. An *A* student will do something “extra” that is significant to move the team forward and spark excellence. This can be self-motivated continuous leadership, long and productive hours when the going gets tough, outstanding quality and quantity of work, or recognition by peers as a key driver of plan excellence. Anyone perceived as not being a good team member cannot get an *A* unless there is considerable improvement over the semester.

**B = Very good work.** To achieve this grade, your work must be at a professional level in terms of the above criteria. A *B* student will do all that is necessary, but not demonstrate that something “extra” to move the team forward. Further, a *B* student might do *A* level work but not be a good team member.

**C = Average work.** This grade will reflect that all work was completed, but the quality of work did not reach the professional level described in the above criteria.

**D = Below average work.** This grade will be received by students who drop the ball more than once, thus putting a burden on their team members. A *D* student will be asked to drop the class if discovered in the first few weeks.

We may also give plus (+) or minus (-) grades.

## Individual Papers as Part of Faculty Assessment

All work must be completed to meet the schedule below (unless changed during class based on the class progress). All written work should be viewed as if it were a communication with the CEO of your advertising agency. As such, all work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors and meet all standards of professional communications.

**Research memo:** You are to write a memo covering your thoughts based on your reading of the plan and understanding of the research done last semester. Include:

1. A list of plan objectives as stated by client (include a measurable task and time frame— e.g., increase market share by 3% by December 31, 2009),
2. A list of what you believe are the three most important unmet information needs,
3. Your own ideas on the class research objectives and data collection method(s).

**Job application:** You will apply for a job within this advertising & marketing agency. Open positions include account executive, research director, creative director, public relations and promotions director, manager of direct/online marketing, media director and director of non-traditional media (other than internet). You may also create a job title you believe is needed and apply for that position. If you are not sure what a position entails, research it online. You are required to write a letter of application for one or more of these positions describing both why you are interested in the position and the skills (including computer skills) you bring to the position. With the letter of application, you should provide a sample of previous work demonstrating your skill in one or more of the areas for which you are applying. Original work will be returned to you.

**Presentation questions:** Submit questions and answers you think the judges might ask the team (Q & A memo).

**A self-assessment essay:** An important characteristic of a valuable professional is the ability to assess one's own work as a basis for improvement. Keep and review notes about your work to discover personal strengths and weaknesses that will help you to contribute well to the team effort. For example, if you see that others must do a lot of editing to your writing, you should seek ways to improve. Near the semester end you will submit a 2-3 page reflective self-assessment essay. You should consider such things as knowledge gained, working habits, writing, researching and teamwork skills. In this essay also describe your contributions to the plan and presentation along with your strengths and weaknesses in an honest and insightful manner with supporting evidence. (This is NOT the place to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the class, but rather on **your** contributions to it.)

<b>Tentative course outline</b> Note: dates and content may change based on class progress through the work.		
<b>Week</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Assignment due</b>
Jan. 21	Introduction to class, client problem, and agency tasks. Research results from fall semester presented Team building exercise. Review and analyze research work from last semester. Discuss additional research needs. Form research teams	Read case and rules, review research on the client and cruise its Web site. Join AAF - \$50 to Bob by 2/2  <b>Research Memo due 1/26:</b> bring 6 copies to class.
Jan. 26	Additional research begins this week. Discuss situation analysis Discussion of clarification Memo 3 Questions (due 2/10)	
Feb. 2	Research findings presented and drafted for Google Group Situation analysis bullet points drafted for Google Group. <i>By this time you should be able to define/profile the target.</i> Identify additional plan objectives, if any, beyond client's request.	<b>Job applications due 2/2</b> Bring 1 copy to class Research results and situation analysis files due on Google Group by 2/9
Feb. 9	Begin creative work Creative discussion and break into teams for preliminary creative idea generation. 2/11 – discuss/refine creative briefs 2/13 @ 5 p.m.– intent to participate form due (faculty task)	Team creative briefs due 2/11
Feb. 18 2/16 is a holiday	Present and discuss creative ideas <i>By this time you should have the Big Idea decided.</i>	Team creative presentations due 2/18
Feb. 23	All week: copy testing, refining big idea.	Read clarification memo 3, published 2/27
March 2	Form teams for creative execution, book, PR/Promotion, Direct/Online, Media, Research, and so forth. <b>IT'S 4 WEEKS UNTIL BOOK IS DUE.</b>  Teams work. Book team presents book time frame/due dates and production plan/costs.	
Mar. 9	Teams present recommendations. Book team presents cover and plan voice/style and draft situation analysis. <i>By this time you should have developed the ideas that will set your team apart from the competition.</i>	
Mar. 16-20	<b>Spring break, but work continues.</b>	
Mar. 23	Intense writing and final plan book creation. Work on presentation outline and materials Pick presenters and form presentation teams this week.	

<b>Week</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Assignment due</b>
March 30	<p><b>PLAN IN OVERNIGHT MAIL by 5:00 pm</b> Deadline: 3/30 date stamp for 3/31 delivery by 5 pm</p> <p>(presentation ideas and draft materials due 4/1) Work on draft presentation, slides, and draft A/V materials; <b>Prepare reminder sheet for judges</b> (8 copies delivered night before competition)</p> <p>Faculty mid-semester grades to students.</p>	<p>1 book and CD - plan in .PDF format to AAF: AAF Education Services 1101 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 500 Washington, DC 20005-6306</p> <p>11 books to: Jocelyn Lee NSAC Chair, District 14, AAF Executive VP Media Services billups worldwide [address TBA] Script, draft A/V materials due 4/1</p>
April 6	<p><b>4/6 First rehearsal in class with slides and A/V.</b> 4/8 rehearsal in class</p>	All final presentation materials due 4/8 - slides and creative executions.
April 13	<p>4/13 rehearsal in class other faculty and question answering strategies 4/13 – 4/16 Practice presentations to UNR classes Prepare CD of A/V presentation for delivery to district coordinator <b>4/17 Formal, live presentation competition at UC Berkeley about 8:30 AM - 5 PM)</b> <b>Presenter rehearsal 4/16 evening in Berkeley</b></p>	<b>Presentation question memo due 4/13</b>
April 20	Course wrap-up and review.	
April 27	Course wrap-up and review	<b>Self evaluation due April 27</b>
May 4	Final class meeting	
May 8	Final exam 2:15-4:15 (exact time TBA)	
June 4-6	National Competition: Arlington, Virginia	