

COMM 290 BRANDING & POSITIONING

FALL 2023 MWF 11:30AM - 12:20PM

OVERVIEW

This course will help you identify and create brand positioning by applying and building on theories, skills, and knowledge from previous communication courses. The best advertising agencies help clients understand that their brands are more than just a product or a service; they are a promise. These agencies give clients the confidence to produce exciting advertising ideas that communicate their brand promises. We will explore the world of brands, consumers, markets, and strategies. We'll look at the ways different marketers manage their brands, turn information into insights, and turn insights into creative ideas.

YOU WILL LEARN:

- A strategic framework to evaluate and create brand statements and brand positionings
- How to determine if a brand's advertising is consistent with its brand positioning
- How to use branding and positioning principles to develop differentiating brand strategies for products and services

ABOUT ME

I'm an advertising agency veteran, most recently an Executive Vice President and Group Creative Director at FCB Chicago. Throughout my career, I've been the creative lead on brands including Coors Light, Miller Lite, KFC, Kraft Foods, Cadbury Beverages, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, and SC Johnson. Over the years, my work has been recognized by the One Show, Cannes Lions, Radio Mercury, Clio, Addy Gold, D&AD, Art Directors Club, Communication Arts, and International Film & TV Festival.

INSTRUCTOR: Chuck Rudnick

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PHONE: 312.286.1734

OFFICE: Lewis Towers 907

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday, 12:30 - 1:30, or by appointment

NO TEXTBOOK, BUT...

There will be assigned reading materials, videos, and case studies posted on Sakai. You will be expected to review the materials and provide written answers to discussion questions.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change. Do not do homework assignments from it. Details for all assignments and projects will be announced during class and posted on Sakai.

WEEK #1 August 28, 30, September 1

Monday: Course overview

Wednesday: What is a brand?

Friday: Brand differentiation

WEEK #2 September 4, 6, 8

Monday: NO CLASS – Labor Day

Wednesday: Positioning statements

Friday: The elevator pitch

Homework: Brand Positioning

WEEK #3 September 11, 13, 15

Monday: Ways to position a brand

Wednesday: Gen-Z marketing

Friday: Brand promise

Homework: Brand Voice

WEEK #4 September 18, 20, 22

Monday: Kickoff Project #1 - Celebrity Endorsers

Wednesday: Know your consumer

Homework: Conversational Marketing

Friday: Consumer research

Homework: Brands Sell Experiences

WEEK #5 September 25, 27, 29

Monday: Brand personality

Homework: The Power of Apple's Brand Positioning

Wednesday: Music and branding

Friday: Work on "Celebrity Endorser" presentations

WEEK #6 October 2, 4, 6

Monday, Wednesday: Students present Project #1 "Celebrity Endorsers"

Friday: Branding in the food industry

Homework: Malcolm Gladwell TED Talk – "Choice, Happiness and Spaghetti Sauce"

WEEK #7 October 9, 11, 13

Monday: NO CLASS – Mid-Semester Break

Wednesday: Kickoff Project #2 - Brand Activism

Friday: Brand strategy workshop

WEEK #8 October 16, 18, 20

Monday: Brand evolution and repositioning

Wednesday: The laws of branding

Friday: In-store branding

Homework: Store check

WEEK #9 October 23, 25, 27

Monday: The battle for your brain

Wednesday: Product placements

Friday: Work on “Brand Activism” presentations

WEEK #10 October 30, November 1, 3

Monday: Students present Project #2 “Brand Activism”

Wednesday: Students present Project #2 “Brand Activism”

Friday: Brand stories

Homework: Jeff Freedman TEDx Talk “What’s Your Brand Story?”

WEEK #11 November 6, 8, 10

Monday: Brand archetypes

Wednesday: Case studies

Friday: Brand storytelling

Homework: The other side of storytelling

WEEK #12 November 13, 15, 17

Monday: Kickoff Project #3 “Brand Audit” presentations

Wednesday: Brand failures

Friday: The evolution of branding

Homework: Debbie Millman TED Talk “How Symbols and Brands Shape Our Humanity”

WEEK #13 November 20, 22, 24

Monday: Brand benefits

Wednesday, Friday: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

WEEK #14 November 27, 29, December 1

Monday: Final assignment details

Wednesday: Guest speaker

Friday: Work on “Brand Audit” presentations

WEEK #15 December 4, 6, 8

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Students present Project #3 “Brand Audit”

FINALS WEEK

Final assignment due by 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 11

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS

Show up. Show up on time. Show initiative. Do your work on time. Work hard. Exhibit professionalism. Have a good attitude. Be attentive. Be enthusiastic. Participate in class. Read and follow assignment instructions carefully. Strive to be your best and exceed expectations. Put forth an evident effort.

HOMEWORK

Based on lessons, readings, and discussion questions you will have various homework assignments. All assignments and due dates will be posted on Sakai. Submit all work on Sakai before the posted deadline. Late assignments will not be accepted.

PROJECTS

There will be three presentation projects: #1 Celebrity Endorsers, #2 Brand Activism, #3 Brand Audit. Details will be announced in class and posted on Sakai.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

There will be a final written assignment; details will be announced in class and posted on Sakai.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

In great part, what you will learn from this class is the result of participating in class discussions, case studies, presentations, and projects. Your attendance is crucial. Missed classes (unexcused absences) will hurt you and your participation score, and will lower your course grade. If you have to miss a class due to a legitimate excuse, such as an illness or family emergency, it's your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible. Completing any missed work will be discussed at that time.

GRADING

Grading will emphasize homework, attendance, class participation, projects, and a final assignment.

Grading scale:

A: 100-95 A-: 94-90

B+: 89-87 B: 86-83 B-: 82-80

C+: 79-77 C: 76-73 C-: 72-70

D+: 69-67 D: 66-64 D-: 63-60

F: Less than 60

GRADE WEIGHTS

40% HOMEWORK

Based on lessons, articles, videos, and discussion questions you will have various homework assignments. The emphasis for grading will be on following directions, strength of your rationale, quality of your writing, and evidence of effort. **Note: Written assignments must be free of spelling/grammar errors. If your work contains blatant errors, expect a reduced grade.**

20% ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Attend, participate, collaborate, and be engaged in the class, including various in-class branding exercises. **Missed classes (unexcused absences) will hurt your participation score and will lower your course grade.**

30% PROJECTS

There will be three presentation projects (each worth 10%) based on topics covered in class.

10% FINAL ASSIGNMENT

There will be a final written assignment.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate the truth, as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher
- Providing information to another student during an examination
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination

- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process

Students who commit an act of plagiarism, whether deliberately or accidentally, will still be held responsible. Ignorance of academic rules, or failure to fact check work, sources and citations, is not an acceptable defense against the charge of plagiarism. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as print, Internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty; any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at:

<http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the chairperson of the department involved, and to the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Students are not to use AI assisted technology in the classroom unless they are specifically authorized to do so by their faculty for an assignment, a test, a quiz, or any deliverable that will be graded.