

COMM 290 BRANDING & POSITIONING

Synchronous Online: Tuesday & Thursday 11:30 - 12:45

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, and International Film & TV Festival.

INSTRUCTOR: Chuck Rudnick

PHONE: 312.286.1734

EMAIL: crudnick@luc.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Please email me to make an appointment.

NO TEXTBOOK, BUT...

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

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: 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 25 & 27

Course overview

Topic: Understanding branding

Homework: What we know about brand positioning

WEEK #2 September 1 & 3

Topics: Consumer research. Brand equity.

Homework: Seven steps to effective brand positioning

WEEK #3 September 8 & 10

Topics: Celebrity endorsers. Brand identity.

Choose teams for Project #1: "Celebrity Endorser" presentations

WEEK #4 September 15 & 17

"Celebrity Endorser" student presentations

WEEK #5 September 22 & 24

Topics: Brand positioning statements. Brand promise.

Homework: Brand voice.

Homework: The power of brand positioning

WEEK #6 September 29 & October 1

Topic: Brand activism

Choose teams/brands for Project #2: "Brand Activism" presentations

WEEK #7 October 6 & 8

Topic: Storytelling

Homework: The other side of storytelling

WEEK #8 October 13 & 15

Topics: Brand personality. Archetypes.

WEEK #9 October 20 & 22

"Brand Activism" student presentations

WEEK #10 October 27 & 29

Topic: Brand evolution. Brand repositioning. Brand benefit.
Homework: Brand purpose

WEEK #11 November 3 & 5

Topic: Brand audit – Project #3
Homework: Brands and the Covid-19 crisis

WEEK #12 November 10 & 12

Topic: Standout brands. Music and branding.
Homework: Emerging trends

WEEK #13 November 17 & 19

Topic: Brand differentiation. Case studies.
Tuesday, November 17 – Project #3 “Brand Audit” due
Homework: Positioning your business
Final assignment announcement

WEEK #14 November 24 & 26

Thanksgiving Break – No class

WEEK #15 December 1 & 3

Topic: Positioning – The battle for your mind

WEEK #16 December 8

Final assignment due by 11:00 AM

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.

HOMEWORK

Based on lessons, readings, articles, and discussion questions you will have various homework assignments. All homework assignments will be posted on Sakai. You will be required to post your completed homework on Sakai. Submit all work before the posted deadline; i.e., before the start of the class for which it is due. Late assignments will not be accepted.

ATTENDANCE

In great part, what you will learn from this class is the result of participating in class discussions, case studies, presentations, and collaborative projects. Your attendance is crucial. **Our synchronous online class will meet via Zoom at our scheduled class time.** 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, projects, attendance, class participation, and a final written 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

15% CLASS 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% HOMEWORK

Based on lessons, articles, and discussion questions you will have various homework assignments. The emphasis for grading will be on following instructions, quality of writing and thinking, and evident effort put forth. Note: Written assignments must be free of spelling/grammar errors. If your work contains blatant errors, expect a reduced grade.

45% PROJECTS

There will be three presentation projects (each worth 15%) based on topics covered in class. Details for these projects will be announced during class and posted on Sakai.

10% FINAL ASSIGNMENT

There will be a final branding & positioning written assignment.

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION STATEMENT ON ACACEMIC INTEGRITY

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate 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; or any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. 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, but is not limited to, the following:

Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, 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; or 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.

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes 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 appropriate area head and to the office of 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.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations. (The School of Communication policy is based entirely on and is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.)