



COMM266-201

# *Creative Thinking Problem Solving*

Spring 2016 T&Th 2:30-3:45 Room 014 School of Communications Building

This course will be taught by a 25-year creative veteran, most recently Executive Creative Director at Leo Burnett and current commercial director who has had 35 years of experience creating ideas.

In-class exercises and homework assignments will be stretching exercises for executing, with a partner, creative ads for a portfolio. All of which will help you really begin to understand how to think and solve problems creatively, a valuable endeavor for whichever field of work you aspire.

We will also have guest speakers from other disciplines who have had to apply creativity in their lives. The class will culminate in the creation of a web site of your best work you've done which will then be critiqued by outside industry professionals.

## Learning Objectives

Students will gain a better understanding of the process of creativity.

They will learn:

How to think divergently and convergently.

How to approach problems creatively from a multitude of angles.

How to be more creative and apply it to any field.

How to think creatively on their feet and present their ideas.

How to prepare a creative advertising portfolio and a web site to display it.

**INSTRUCTOR: Bob Akers**

**Office: LT903**

**Phone: 312-915-6556**

**Cell: 815-341-4191**

**Email: rakers@luck.edu**

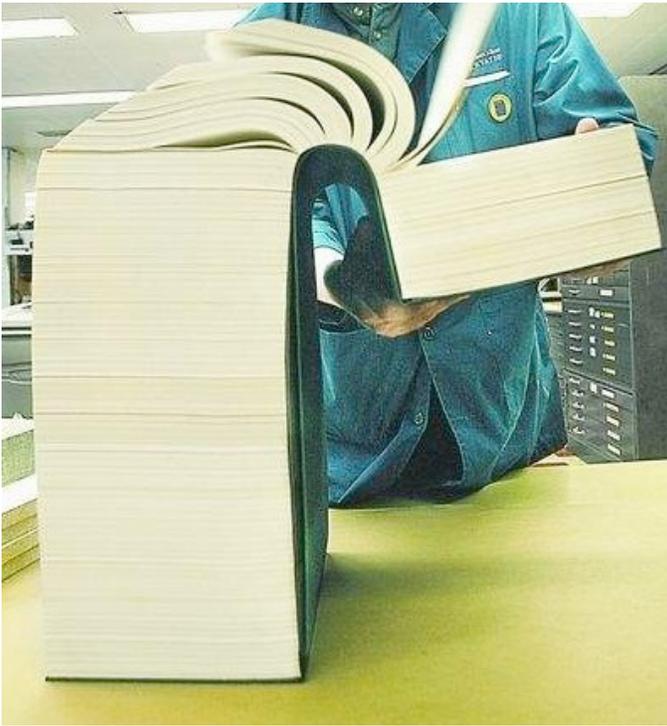
**Office Hours:**

**Tues. & Thurs. 9-10 am,  
1-2 pm or by appointment**

## Guest Speakers

Speakers for this class will be drawn from a variety of disciplines for students to learn how creativity is approached in different fields like music, architecture, cooking, graphic design, humor, film directing and editing, ceramics, costume design, acting, cartooning. All the speakers will explain how they solve problems in their particular line of work using creativity.





## Text Book

The textbook for this class is a huge tome in which all creative ideas can be found. I wish.

Oh, if there only was such a grand book where you could just turn to a page and get your ideas.

Sadly, that doesn't exist. Which is what this course is about--finding creative ideas yourself.

There are many books, however, that talk about the creative process which I'll expose you to in class. But there will be no textbook you have to buy or from which we'll do actual assignments. (I just saved you some money.)

## Course Schedule\*

### \*Subject to Change!

#### Week 1

Are you creative or not?

Where do ideas come from?

In-class exercise: Worst ways to solve a problem

Portfolio Requirements

Review of What and How: Starting with the strategy to get to the creative idea

Homework: 1. Create a list of potential products for your portfolio

2. Divergent Thinking Exercise

#### Week 2

Guest speaker

Students present divergent ideas

In-Class exercise: Creating collaboratively.

Review of examples of student portfolios

Homework: 1. From list of products, write the strategies

2. Observation assignment

#### Week 3

Students present observation homework.

Students present strategies for portfolio products

In-class exercise: Writing without stopping.

Homework: 1. Develop 10 ideas from one of your products

#### Week 4

Guest speaker

Improv. Thinking creatively on your feet.

Homework: 1. Improve your ad ideas

2. Invent a product that every teenager in America would buy

#### Week 5

Students present and discuss 10 ideas.

Students present new product idea.

In-class exercise: What if? Exploring the ridiculous to uncover the brilliant.

Homework: 1. Continue working on ideas for portfolio

2. Create a new love symbol

“The whole point to creativity is to change the game.”

--Guy Bommarito  
“Creative Bones”

### **Week 6**

Students present ideas and discuss  
Students present love symbol  
In-class exercise: Solving problems with unrelated ideas.  
Review of social media, interactive, participatory creative ads  
Homework: Begin working on new product for portfolio

### **Week 7**

Guest speaker  
Students present new ideas and discuss  
In-class exercise: Non-linear thinking.  
Solve a big problem with word association.  
No homework

### **Week 8**

Spring Break

### **Week 9**

Students present ideas and discuss  
In-class exercise: Picture first. Start with an image and let the words write themselves.  
Homework: Continue working on ideas  
You are a cartoonist. Create 50 ideas and create a cartoon from your best.

### **Week 10**

Students present ideas and discuss  
Students present cartoons  
Guest speaker

### **Week 11**

Students present ideas and discuss  
Students present cartoons  
In-class exercise: Finding great ideas from bad ones.  
How to build your site: what's required  
Teams work on portfolio ideas, present and discuss  
Homework: Continue developing portfolio ideas  
Invent a product every retiree in America would buy

### **Week 12**

Students present portfolio work and discuss  
Students present new product  
In-class exercise: Re-think something everyone has seen a thousand times and make it better.  
Homework: Continue developing portfolio ideas

### **Week 13**

Students present portfolio work and discuss  
Guest speaker  
How to present your ideas.  
In-class exercise: Write the ending first.  
Homework: Continue developing ideas

### **Week 14**

Students present final portfolio work and discuss  
Guest speaker  
Homework: Polish your site

### **Week 15**

Student present final work to outside professionals for critique

## **How to Succeed in This Class**

Attend class. Duh. Miss class and you're going to miss something important. Present your ideas with enthusiasm and conviction. Participate in class. Ask questions. Contribute ideas. Make yourself known.

Read and follow assignment instructions. I want you to do well in this class. As such, I give very explicit instructions so there should be no room for error. Students in my classes who do poorly on assignments do so almost always because they didn't read the instructions.

Be a team player. Many of the in-class exercises and homework assignments will require working with a partner, just as in the real ad world. That means not only working cooperatively but also making yourself available outside of class to work together. Attendance, participation and effort will not only affect you but your partner. And vice-versa.

Lastly, scratch below the surface for every idea. Dig deep!



# Important Stuff

## Attendance

Class will start promptly at 7 pm. You should be in your seat and ready to begin at this time. Because discussions, activities and assignments will often be based on presentations shown in class, it will be critical that you arrive on time so as not to miss the point of discussion. Class ends at 9:30. Packing up your things early is disruptive to others and to me.

## Excused Absences

Think about it this way, if you don't go to your job, you get fired. Same deal here. Well, you won't get fired, but if you don't attend class, you're going to be at risk of failing. Keep in mind that for much of the work for this course, you'll be working with a partner. Missing classes will adversely affect not only you but your partner.

Any assignments given during any missed period must be turned in by the date assigned and it is the responsibility of the student to obtain information on any missed assignments. If it is necessary for a student to miss a class due to a legitimate excuse, such as a major illness or true family emergency, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor as soon as possible with written substantiation. Completing any missed work will be discussed at that time.



## Phones and Laptops

Laptops and iPads may only be used for certain in-class activities. At all other times, they must be stored away. Use of phones is not allowed including checking text messages, etc. as they are distracting to the presenter and your fellow classmates.



## Paperless Class

No assignments will be accepted on paper (or to my email!). Submit all work on Sakai before the posted deadline. All materials presented in class will be posted on Sakai after class as will all the homework assignments.

## Late Work

In the real world, if your work is late you'll soon be in the unemployment line. In this class, late work will mean you get zero. Zip. Nada.

# Grading

Grading will emphasize presentations and contributions during class, along with writing exercises of varying length. It will also emphasize weekly outside written assignments of varying lengths and the presentation of a term project.

Specifically, coursework will include individually-written papers, multiple in-class and outside-of-class exercises working as a two-person team as in the real world. Also, as in the real world, students will be given the opportunity to work with different partners throughout the course. You will be graded on the lessons you absorb and apply to your work through your writings and ideas, the demonstration of your understanding of the lessons taught in class, and the overall progress you make, as well as the quality of your ideas and the effort you put into them. All grading will be based on pre-established rubrics posted on Sakai. Reading those rubrics, and not just the assignment instructions, will go a long way toward helping you get a good grade in this class.

Grading scale: A: 92-100, B: 82-91, C: 72-81, D: 64-71, F: Below 64

## Grade Weights



- 40%** Homework. This will include all the written work which will include several one-page assignments and several longer assignments. As in the real world, the emphasis will not be on the number of pages, but the quality of the content and the presentation of it.
- 20%** Classroom Contributions: This would include what you say and how often you contribute in class. Raise your hand. Ask questions. Answer my questions. Ask our guests questions. Use every class as an opportunity to contribute to our collective learning.
- 40%** This will be the summation of the work you do in and outside of class for your portfolio. You will work with various partners for this work throughout the term. But the final grade will be yours, based on the effort you've put into the totality of the work you've done for your "book."

# Cheating, plagiarism and all the dastardly things that would shame your parents.

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. 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. 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](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.)

## Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Loyola University Chicago is committed to maintaining an environment which respects the dignity of all individuals. Accordingly, Loyola University will not tolerate sexual harassment by or of its students, faculty, or employees. To the extent practicable, Loyola University will attempt to protect the Loyola community from sexual harassment by vendors, consultants, and other third parties who interact with the Loyola community. Loyola University is promulgating this policy to reaffirm its opposition to sexual harassment and to emphasize that learning opportunities and employment opportunities must not be interfered with by sexual harassment. deal with individuals found to have engaged in harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation in violation of this policy. For more information on this policy please visit:[http://www.luc.edu/hr/policies/policy\\_sexualharassment.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/hr/policies/policy_sexualharassment.shtml)

## One Last Word



Wear your creative “pencil” down to the nub.  
It’s the only way you’re going to really be creative.