COMM 290 BRANDING & POSITIONING

SPRING 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
EMAIL: crudnick@luc.edu
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 January 16, 18, 20
Monday: Martin Luther King Day – NO CLASS
Wednesday: Course overview
Friday: What is branding?

WEEK #2 January 23, 25, 27
Monday: Brand differentiation
Homework: What We Know About Brand Positioning
Wednesday: How to position a brand
Friday: Brand stories
Homework: Jeff Freedman TEDx Talk “What’s Your Brand Story?”

WEEK #3 January 30, February 1, 3
Monday: Positioning statements
Wednesday: The elevator pitch
Friday: Brand promise
Homework: Brand Voice

WEEK #4 February 6, 8, 10
Monday: Kickoff Project #1 “Celebrity Brand Ambassadors” presentations
Wednesday: Know your consumer
Homework: Conversational Marketing
Friday: Consumer research
Homework: Brands Sell Experiences

WEEK #5 February 13, 15, 17
Monday: Brand personality
Homework: The Power of Apple’s Brand Positioning
Wednesday: Product placements
Friday: Work on “Celebrity Brand Ambassadors” presentations

WEEK #6 February 20, 22, 24
Monday: Students present Project #1 “Celebrity Brand Ambassadors”
Wednesday: Students present Project #1 “Celebrity Brand Ambassadors”
Friday: In-store branding
Homework: Store check

WEEK #7 February 27, March 1, 3
Monday: Kickoff Project #2 “Brand Activism” presentations
**Wednesday**: Music and branding  
**Friday**: Case studies

**WEEK #8 March 6. 8. 10**  
**Monday, Wednesday, Friday**: Spring Break – NO CLASS

**WEEK #9 March 13, 15, 17**  
**Monday**: The battle for your brain  
**Wednesday**: Guest speaker  
**Friday**: Work on “Brand Activism” presentations

**WEEK #10 March 20, 22, 24**  
**Monday**: Students present Project #2 “Brand Activism”  
**Wednesday**: Students present Project #2 “Brand Activism”  
**Friday**: Storytelling  
Homework: The Other Side of Storytelling

**WEEK #11 March 27, 29, 31**  
**Monday**: Recognizable brands  
**Wednesday**: Brand archetypes  
**Friday**: Branding in the food industry  
Homework: Malcolm Gladwell TED Talk – “Choice, Happiness and Spaghetti Sauce”

**WEEK #12 April 3, 5, 7**  
**Monday**: Kickoff Project #3 “Brand Audit” presentations  
**Wednesday**: Brand strategy workshop  
**Friday**: Easter Holiday – NO CLASS

**WEEK #13 April 10, 12, 14**  
**Monday**: Easter Holiday – NO CLASS  
**Wednesday**: Brand failures  
**Friday**: The evolution of branding  
Homework: Debbie Millman TED Talk – “How Symbols and Brands Shape Our Humanity”

**WEEK #14 April 17, 19, 21**  
**Monday**: Final assignment details  
**Wednesday**: Brand evolution and repositioning  
**Friday**: Work on “Brand Audit” presentations

**WEEK #15 April 24, 26, 28**  
**Monday, Wednesday, Friday**: Students present Project #3 “Brand Audit”

**FINALS WEEK**  
Final assignment due by 3:00 p.m. on Monday, May 1
HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS

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; i.e., before the start of the class for which it is due. Late assignments will not be accepted.

PROJECTS
There will be three presentation projects; 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**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td><strong>HOMEWORK</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td><strong>ATTENDANCE &amp; PARTICIPATION</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td><strong>PROJECTS</strong></td>
<td>There will be three presentation projects (each worth 10%) based on topics covered in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td><strong>FINAL ASSIGNMENT</strong></td>
<td>There will be a final written assignment.</td>
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**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC 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.)