

## COMMS 312 | SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION | SPECIAL EVENTS PLANNING | SPRING 2016

### CLASS SCHEDULE

Thursdays 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.  
Water Tower Campus | Corboy Law Center #422

### INSTRUCTOR

Steph Bottoms

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: [sbottoms@luc.edu](mailto:sbottoms@luc.edu)  
Office Hours: Thursdays 6 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.  
Office Location: Lewis Towers #900-B  
Mailbox: Located at SOC

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

"For Grace" movie rental/purchase via iTunes, Amazon or Google Play ([forgracefilm.com](http://forgracefilm.com), release date 2.2.16)  
*No required textbook*

### COURSE OVERVIEW

Special Events Planning is an introduction to event production, experiential marketing and the role of communications in production. This course is designed for students with a background in PR, advertising or integrated marketing communications. The goal of this course is to teach students about the 360-degree approach to event production in the world of PR, including creative ideation, production elements, media relations, real-time engagement and budget management.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will emphasize the importance of creativity, client service, attention to detail, writing and presentation skills, professionalism, networking and PR basics. Lectures, assignments, real-world experience and guest speaker presentations will showcase how to deliver flawless execution against a client's goals and tailored to a brand's authentic voice, resulting in media coverage and social media buzz.

### GRADING SCALE

A	100-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-88
B	87-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-78
C	77-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-68
D	67-63
D-	62-60
F	59-0

### STUDENT GRADE OPTIONS

- Pass/Fail: Must be declared by end of week two of classes.
- Auditing: Students may participate in class discussions and sit in on meetings. They pay tuition for the course, but are not required to do homework.
- Withdrawal: **Students may withdraw from a class during the first week of the semester without receiving a W on their transcript.** After that, they have until late March to withdraw without having the dropped class affect their grade point average. If they miss the last date to withdraw, they receive a WF, which will negatively affect their grade point.
- Incomplete: **An incomplete grade must be initiated by the student.** Appropriate reasons for granting an incomplete (usually within the last two weeks of the semester) include unforeseeable, unavoidable delays in completing work or other disastrous events over which a student has no

control. The instructor may require verifiable supporting evidence to grant the request, such as doctor's notes, obituaries or police reports. It is up to the instructor to weigh compassion for the student with fairness to class members who met deadlines and completed all coursework.

If you grant an incomplete, a written contract regarding what work is to be completed and the deadline for finishing it should be kept on paper by both student and faculty member. A copy of the contract should be given to the Dean's office. The "I" will automatically convert to an "F" the following semester if the student does not complete the work and/or the instructor does not assign a grade to replace the incomplete. Grade changes are implemented by going in to LOCUS and submitting the request change of grade request.

### **FINAL GRADES**

Semester grades will be recorded through LOCUS within 72 hours of the final exam period. Students are entitled to a clear and timely explanation of grades assigned during the semester and afterward. The instructor will be available via email for 30 days after final grades are recorded to provide such explanations.

### **GRADE GRIEVANCES**

Students are expected to discuss grade grievances with the instructor first. Students have 30 days after the end of a semester to express their concerns. If the grievance cannot be resolved, students should contact the SOC's Dean's office, who will determine if resolution can be reached or whether to initiate a formal department grievance process. A burden of proof rests with the student to demonstrate why they believe their grade was assigned inaccurately or with capriciousness.

### **LATE WORK**

Late assignments will be docked one letter grade each day past deadline. Extensions may be approved with advanced notice to the instructor.

### **REWRITES**

If the instructor determines you need to rewrite an essay, the student has one week to rewrite the assignment to earn back up to half the points deducted.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is mandatory. The instructor may excuse an absence with advanced notice from the student. For an excused or a non-excused absence, students are still responsible for submitting assignments on due date and for completing in-class assignments or an alternative assignment as provided by the instructor. If a student acquires multiple absences, the instructor reserves the right to reduce a student's grade.

### **ELECTRONICS USE**

Cell phones should be silenced and put away. In case of an emergency, please exit the classroom for phone use. Laptops and tablets should be put away unless specifically allowed by instructor for class use.

### **CHANGES IN SYLLABUS OR COURSE WORK**

The instructor reserves the right to modify or substitute coursework, including readings and assignments, during the course to optimize learning. However, such changes will not result in a substantially increased workload or decreased opportunities to earn points. Students' grades and experiences are likely to benefit from any changes.

### **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. 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.)*

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

### **OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY POLICY FOR STUDENTS MISSING CLASSES WHILE REPRESENTING LOYOLA**

Students will not be penalized for being absent while representing Loyola if proper documentation is provided. This includes students participating in intercollegiate athletics, debate, model government organizations, etc. Make-up assignments and handouts missed will be available. It is the student's responsibility to obtain lecture notes from a peer and to properly document absences.

### **MILITARY SERVICE**

Students who have been called into the armed services of the United States and who are consequently withdrawing from the university before the end of the withdrawal period will receive a refund of all tuition and fees paid for the period in question but no academic credit. If they withdraw after the end of the withdrawal period, they will receive full academic credit for the semester with grades as of the date of withdrawal but no refund of tuition.

### **HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND ABUSE**

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religious, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational mission. Discrimination is adverse treatment of a person or group based on protected categories and not on individual merit. Abuse is oral, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on characteristics protected by law, where the offensive behavior is intimidating and/or demeaning. It may include verbal slurs, invectives or epithets. Harassment differs from abuse insofar as it is repeated and persistent behavior of a similar nature. It also includes unwanted physical advances or intimidations and the display of visual materials that defame, demean or humiliate. Behavior of this kind is not tolerated by Loyola University Chicago and should be reported to the School of Communication dean's office. Such complaints will be treated in confidence to the extent feasible, given the need to conduct an investigation and take corrective action. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Loyola University Chicago will not tolerate it by faculty, students or other employees, and will attempt to take prompt corrective action against any sexual harassment by or of its students, faculty and employees. Persons who believe they have been harmed by harassment of this kind should bring the conduct to the attention of the School of

Communication dean's office. All complaints are taken seriously and no one reporting them will suffer reprisal or retaliation from the university. Such complaints will be treated in confidence to the extent feasible, given the need to conduct a thorough investigation and take corrective action.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### "FOR GRACE" FILM | ESSAY

**Overview:** Obtain a copy of "For Grace" through iTunes, Amazon or Google Play rental or purchase (film to be released on these platforms on 2.2.16). This film showcases the conception of an idea, the creativity and logistics behind the experience, and the physical manifestation of these elements. Upon due date, student must submit a two-page essay reflecting on film.

**Components:**

- Watch the film
- Submit two-page essay that answers the following:
  - What similarities or elements of event production did you see? Describe.
  - What did you find most interesting about the film? Why?
  - What would you have done differently, if you were to create a similar experience from scratch?

**12 points**

### CREATIVE PROJECT | MOODBOARD, ESSAY, PRESENTATION

**Overview:** Students are responsible for researching and selecting a brand to serve as a mock client, for which they will develop a moodboard that represents the brand essence and reflects the look and feel of the client event. Upon due date, students must submit a two-page essay describing the moodboard plus a printout of moodboard.

**Components:**

- Research and select a brand to serve as your mock client
- Develop an electronic visual moodboard with images representative of design/decor, catering, venue, entertainment/creativity, etc.
- Submit printout of moodboard (color, 8"x11")
- Submit a two-page essay that answers the following:
  - What brand did you select as your client? Why?
  - Who is the target audience for the brand/your event?
  - Describe your selections and why you chose them
- Present in class (5 minutes)

**30 points**

## VOLUNTEER PROJECT | PARTICIPATION, ESSAY, LETTER

**Overview:** Students are responsible for researching and securing an opportunity at which they can be a volunteer. Students must submit a one-paragraph synopsis of an event production volunteer opportunity to instructor no later than 2.25 for instructor's review and approval. Once event is approved by instructor, the student must arrange to actively participate in production of event. Upon due date, students must submit a two-page essay on volunteer experience plus feedback letter from event supervisor.

### Components:

- Research and secure event opportunity at which to volunteer
- Submit one-paragraph proposal to instructor for opportunity approval
- Actively participate in event production as designated by event supervisor
- Submit a post-event letter from event supervisor confirming your participation and performance feedback
- Submit a two-page essay that answers the following:
  - How did you find the opportunity?
  - How did you connect with the event producer and secure the opportunity?
  - Provide event background: client background, purpose of event, target audience, location, date and time
  - What was your role in the event?
  - What were the event elements you observed? What left an impression on you?
  - What would you have done differently, if you were to produce the event?
  - What did you learn from this experience?

*Exceptions may be approved if event execution occurs after deadline. Please see instructor to discuss.*

**60 points**

## EVENT RECOMMENDATION FINAL | GROUP PARTICIPATION, PROJECT, PRESENTATION

**Overview:** Students will be assigned into groups of three to four and assigned one of two brands/clients for which to develop an event recommendation, consisting of elements and learnings taught throughout the course. This includes but is not limited to:

- Project timeline
- Event run-of-show
- Venue recommendation, floorplan and detailed explanation
- Design moodboard and detailed explanation
- Catering recommendation
- Talent partner recommendation
- A/V recommendation
- Traditional media and social media strategy
- Media materials – news release, media list and social content calendar
- Guest takeaway (e.g., materials for media, gift for attendees)
- Invitation mock-up and invitee list
- Staffing roles and responsibilities
- Budget

### Components:

- Submit group's list of questions for client to answer on conference call and select at least two group representatives to participate in call
- Actively participate and collaborate with team members
- Submit paper/binder (aka "project") of event elements (25-30 pages) – due 4.28
- Present in class to client (20 minutes) – on 4.28 and 5.5

**105 points**



## COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY	ASSIGNMENT DUE
January 21	Course overview	Review syllabus Group discussion/activity	
January 28	Intro to event production	Revisit "For Grace" essay Lecture Group discussion/activity	
February 4	<i>No class meeting</i> "For Grace" viewing	Rent/purchase "For Grace" documentary	
February 11	Role of PR and social Talent management	Revisit volunteer project Lecture Group discussion/activity	"For Grace" essay
February 18	Sports	Guest speaker Revisit final + assign groups Revisit/schedule client conference call for final Revisit next class meeting Group discussion/activity	Volunteer project proposal
February 25	Hospitality, menu planning and catering <i>Off-site class at 7 p.m.</i>	Guest speaker <i>Meet at Formento's</i> <i>925 W. Randolph</i> <i>(SE corner of Randolph &amp; Sangamon)</i>	
March 3	Moodboard presentations	Mid-term evaluations Revisit client questions Individual presentations	Creative project moodboards and essay
<b>March 10 – NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</b>			
March 17	Sponsorships, festivals and trade shows	Lecture Group discussion/activity	Questions from group to client for event recommendation final
March 24	<i>No class meeting</i> Conference call for final	Client conference call at pre-scheduled time on off-day	
March 31	International events	Guest speaker Review client conference call notes Group discussion/activity	Volunteer project essay and feedback letter
April 7	Mobile tours	Lecture Group discussion/activity	
April 14	Budget	Lecture Group discussion/activity	
April 21	Fundraising	Guest speaker Final evaluations Group work time for final	
April 28	Final group presentations	Client A presentations	<b>ALL</b> final projects, presentation printouts
May 5 (no time change)	Final group presentations	Client B presentations	

**RUBRIC | FILM ESSAY | 12 POINTS**

<b>Essay</b>				
• What similarities or elements of event production did you see? Describe.	0	1	2	3
• What did you find most interesting about the film? Why?	0	1	2	3
• What would you have done differently, if you were to create a similar experience from scratch?	0	1	2	3
• Writing mechanics	0	1	2	3
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				

**RUBRIC | CREATIVE PROJECT | 30 POINTS**

<b>Moodboard</b>				
• Design/décor	0	1	2	3
• Catering	0	1	2	3
• Venue	0	1	2	3
• Entertainment/creativity	0	1	2	3
<b>Essay</b>				
• What brand did you select as your client? Why?	0	1	2	3
• Who is the target audience for your brand and event?	0	1	2	3
• Describe your selections and why you chose them	0	1	2	3
• Writing mechanics	0	1	2	3
<b>Presentation</b>				
• Content	0	1	2	3
• Delivery	0	1	2	3
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				

**RUBRIC | VOLUNTEER PROJECT | 60 POINTS**

Paragraph for approval	0			5
Feedback letter from event supervisor	0			10
<b>Essay</b>				
• How did you find the opportunity?	0	1	2	3
• How did you connect with the event producer and secure the opportunity?	0	1	2	3
• Provide event background: client background, purpose of event, target audience, location, date and time	0	2	4	6
• What was your role in the event?	0	2	4	6
• What were the event elements you observed? What left an impression on you?	0	2	4	6
• What would you have done differently, if you were to produce the event?	0	2	4	6
• What did you learn from this experience?	0	2	4	6
• Writing mechanics	0	3	6	9
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				

**RUBRIC | FINAL | 105 POINTS**

<b>Project</b>				
• Creativity, quality of ideas	0	3	6	9
• Project timeline	0	1	2	3
• Event run-of-show	0	2	4	6
• Venue recommendation, floorplan, explanation	0	2	4	6
• Design moodboard, explanation	0	2	4	6
• Catering recommendation	0	1	2	3
• Talent partner recommendation	0	1	2	3
• A/V recommendation	0	1	2	3
• Traditional media and social media strategy	0	1	2	3
• News release	0	1	2	3
• Media list	0	1	2	3
• Social content calendar	0	1	2	3
• Guest takeaway	0	1	2	3
• Invitation	0	1	2	3
• Invited guest list	0	1	2	3
• Staffing roles & responsibilities	0	2	4	6
• Budget	0	1	2	3
• Writing mechanics	0	2	4	6
<b>Presentation</b>				
• Creativity, content	0	3	6	9
• Delivery	0	2	4	6
• Visual representation of ideas	0	3	6	9
• Writing mechanics	0	2	4	6
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				