

Course Syllabus

COMM 351 Writing for Media: Copywriting
Fall Semester 2019

Professor Mark Tolstedt

Comm Arts Center #228

346-3920

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10-11AM

M/W: by appointment

Course Description:

Writing techniques and processes for media. Typical offerings include documentary writing, writing the screenplay, writing for sports media, and writing for television.

The goal for this section of COMM 351 is to give students exposure to the concepts and process of copywriting across media platforms.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this class;

- 1) Students will be able to apply creative strategy to solve marketing problems.
- 2) Students will demonstrate the application of a strategic message across multiple types of media.
- 3) Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate to varying audiences.
- 4) Students will demonstrate the ability work with words, design, and layout principles
- 5) Students will demonstrate creative presentation skills

Required Textbooks:

Sugarman, J, (2007), *The Adweek Copywriting Handbook: The Ultimate Guide to Writing Powerful Advertising and Marketing Copy from One of America's Top Copywriters*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Final grades for this class are determined on student performance in three areas: assignments, in-class participation and a final examination. The final examination is course comprehensive and consists of essay questions. There are several in-class exercises over the course of the semester. Participation and contributions to the

activity are evaluated and contribute to the points earned for the in-class participation point totals. There are three assignments students complete during the semester.

In-class participation:	30 Points
Final Examination:	50 Points
Assignments:	120 Points
Brand Yourself:	20 Points
Fun Product Campaign:	40 Points
With in-class presentation	
Major Campaign	60 Points
With in-class presentation	

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 200

Point Totals and Grading Scale:

95%+	=	A	190-200
94%	=	A-	188-289
93%	=	B+	186-187
87%-92%	=	B	174-185
86%	=	B-	172-173
85%	=	C+	179-171
77%-84%	=	C	154-169
76%	=	C-	152-153
75%	=	D+	150-151
71%-74%	=	D	142-149
0%-70%	=	F	0-141

About the Assignments:

--BRAND YOURSELF CAMPAIGN: This campaign is focused on branding yourself for potential real-world employers and clients. The campaign will consist of:

- An about me statement
- A resume
- Your own personal website or YouTube channel or blog site or LinkedIn page.

--FUN PRODUCT CAMPAIGN: This campaign is to get your creative juices flowing based on concepts and lessons from the lectures throughout the semester. Choose a "fun product" from which you will create four final deliverables. All four executions in this campaign will be based on the same product, so choose wisely – something for which you won't run out of ideas. The campaign will consist of:

- A creative brief
- One print execution
- One TV execution
- One digital/online execution

- One out-of-home, non-traditional execution
- FINAL MAJOR CAMPAIGN: Your final campaign will be a cumulative, integrated campaign advertising a single product that fits into one of the categories below (or another approved by me.). The campaign MAY NOT be targeted to the 18-24-year-old college demographic. The campaign MAY NOT be for a restaurant or any local business. Your final campaign will consist of:
- A creative brief
 - Two print executions
 - One TV or radio execution
 - One outdoor execution
 - One digital/online execution
- PRODUCT CATEGORIES:
- Any kind of toiletry (shampoo, toothpaste, etc.)
 - Any kind of packaged food item
 - Any over-the-counter medication
 - Cosmetics • Any kind of car
 - Beverages
 - Any kind of household product
 - Electronics • Airlines or other kinds of services
 - Other ideas that are approved by me

You should start working on your major campaign by mid semester. I am happy to discuss concepts and ideas with you throughout the semester; but understand that there is a time commitment to this assignment.

Other Relevant Information:

HOW CREATIVE WORK IS GRADED: Don't worry. Not everyone is interested in working in the creative side of advertising – I know that. However, it is important that you have a very good grasp on what goes into executing creative work. In this course, your work will be graded based on many different factors, none of which require a tremendous amount of artistic ability. Some of those factors are:

-*Research*: Do you have the requisite knowledge to speak credibly about the products and services you have chosen? Have you learned about the target market, what motivates them, and what doesn't?

-*Strategy*: Do you have a good plan for positioning your product in the marketplace? How will you use media to get your message across? Should you use alternative media?

-*Concept*: Is your idea fresh? Extendible? Effective? Appropriate for a campaign or a stand-alone ad?

-*Craft*: Is your layout well-designed? Is your body copy tight, memorable, and evocative? Do the layout and copy work well together? Is the material presentation of your work attractive? Does the typography work? Does your design and copy fit your target audience and the product? Is/are your visuals appropriate and arresting?

-*Presentation*: Were you professional, enthusiastic, thorough, clear, and compelling?

-Originality: Can you create a unique, interesting way of looking at the product or service, so that people actually want to hear what you have to say about it?

I will be using email to contact you individually as needed. I will be posting updates and other information to the announcement area of the CANVAS site for this class on a regular basis. It is expected that you monitor CANVAS for this class on a regular, if not daily, basis.

I will use Canvas in the class ONLY for announcements, submitting assignments, and tracking point totals.

Dates due are deadlines:

-I will allow you to reschedule the date and time ONLY for reasons related to a death in the family, a conflict with another university activity, or a significant illness. In all cases, you must inform me in a timely fashion, in advance of the scheduled work. Please note: I may very well refuse to allow you to reschedule the date and/or time.

-Please refer to the schedule in the course syllabus AND to the calendar in CANVAS for due dates and times. If I ask for a revision to your work or I grant you a deadline extension, you have one (1) week from the original due date to submit the work.

Attendance is Required: I will take attendance every class session. I will use attendances as a final grade variable: if you are a point or two away from a higher grade and have attended most, if not all of the classes, I will give you the benefit of the doubt and give you the higher grade. If you have three or more unexcused class absences, you don't get the benefit of the doubt.

Care Team

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is committed to the safety and success of all students. The Office of the Dean of Students supports the campus community by reaching out and providing resources in areas where a student may be struggling or experiencing barriers to their success. Faculty and staff are asked to be proactive, supportive, and involved in facilitating the success of our students through early detection, reporting, and intervention. As your instructor, I may contact the Office of the Dean of Students if I sense you are in need of additional support which individually I may not be able to provide. You may also share a concern if you or another member of our campus community needs support, is distressed, or exhibits concerning behavior that is interfering with the academic or personal success or the safety of others, by reporting here:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx>.

Title IX

UW-Stevens Point is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and institutional policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In the event that you choose to disclose information about having survived sexual violence, including harassment, rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, and specify that this violence occurred while a student at UWSP, federal and state laws mandate that I, as your instructor, notify the Title IX Coordinator/Office of the Dean of Students.

Please see the information on the Dean of Students webpage for information on making confidential reports of misconduct or interpersonal violence, as well as campus and community resources available to students. Dean of Students:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/DOS/sexualassault> Title IX page:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/hr/Pages/Affirmative%20Action/Title-IX.aspx>

Disability and Accommodations

In accordance with [federal law and UW System policies](#), UWSP strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you need accommodations for a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please visit with the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) to determine reasonable accommodations and notify faculty. After notification, please discuss your accommodations with me so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **DATC contact info:** datctr@uwsp.edu; 715/346-3365; 609 Albertson Hall, 900 Reserve Street

FERPA

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) provides students with a right to protect, review, and correct their student records. Staff of the university with a clear *educational need to know* may also have to access to certain student records. Exceptions to the law include parental notification in cases of alcohol or drug use, and in case of a health or safety concern. FERPA also permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent, to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an expectation of each UW-Stevens Point student. Campus community members are responsible for fostering and upholding an environment in which student learning is fair, just, and honest. Through your studies as a student, it is essential to exhibit the highest level of personal honesty and respect for the intellectual property of others. Academic misconduct is unacceptable. It compromises and disrespects the integrity

of our university and those who study here. To maintain academic integrity, a student must only claim work which is the authentic work solely of their own, providing correct citations and credit to others as needed. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and/or helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. Failure to understand what constitutes academic misconduct does not exempt responsibility from engaging in it. For more information on UWS chapter 14 visit: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>

Reporting Incidents of Bias/Hate

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

If you have experienced a bias incident (an act of conduct, speech, or expression to which a bias motive is evident as a contributing factor regardless of whether the act is criminal) at UWSP, you have the right to report it: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx>.

You may also contact the Office of the Dean of Students directly at dos@uwsp.edu. Diversity and College Access is available for resources and support of all students: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dca/Pages/default.aspx>.

Clery Act

The US Department of Education requires universities to disclose and publish campus crime statistics, security information, and fire safety information annually. Statistics for the three previous calendar years and policy statements are released on or before October 1st in our [Annual Security Report](#). Another requirement of the Clery Act is that the campus community must be given timely warnings of ongoing safety threats and immediate/emergency notifications. For more information about when and how these notices will be sent out, please see our [Jeanne Clery Act](#) page.

The **Drug Free Schools and Communities Act** (DFSCA) requires institutions of higher education to establish policies that address unlawful possession, use, or distribution of

alcohol and illicit drugs. The DFSCA also requires the establishment of a drug and alcohol prevention program. The Center for Prevention lists information about alcohol and drugs, their effects, and the legal consequences if found in possession of these substances.

[Center for Prevention – DFSCA](#)

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act. Each year students violate these laws and campus policies, putting themselves at risk of federal prosecution. For more information about what to expect if you are caught, or to take preventive measures to keep your computing device clean, visit our [copyright page](#).

Course Schedule:

Note: I reserve the right to make changes to the course requirements depending on need. If this happens, you will be notified of any changes in class, via CANVAS, and through email.

Week 1:

Tuesday, September 3rd: Course Introduction
 Thursday, September 5th: Introduction to copywriting part 1
 Friday, September 6th: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Unit 1: Copywriting, Advertising, and Branding

Week 2:

Tuesday, September 10th: introduction to copywriting part 2
Read Sugarman chapters 1-9
 Thursday, September 12th: introduction to copywriting part 3
 Friday, September 13th: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week 3:

Tuesday, September 17th: writing for brand and marketing
Read Sugarman chapters 10-17
 Thursday, September 19th: writing headlines and clickbait
 Friday, September 20th: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week 4:

Tuesday, September 24th: writing emotionally engaging copy
 Thursday, September 26th: writing "pleasure" inducing copy
 Friday, September 27th: **In-Class Exercise**

Week 5:

Tuesday, October 1st: unconventional copy: restaurant menus
 Thursday, October 3rd: copywriting techniques and tips part 1
 Friday, October 4th: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Unit 2: Copywriting Process(es) and Procedures

Week 6:

Tuesday, October 8th: copywriting techniques and tips part 2

Read Sugarman chapters 18-22

Thursday, October 10th: copywriting techniques and tips part 3

Friday, October 11th: **Brand Yourself Due**

CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week 7:

Tuesday, October 15th: copywriting techniques and tips part 4

Thursday, October 17th: using drama in copy

Friday, October 18^h: **In-Class Exercise**

Week 8:

Tuesday, October 22nd: writing copy for digital and social media part 1

Thursday, October 24th: writing copy for digital and social media part 2

Friday, October 25th: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week 9:

Tuesday, October 29th: writing copy for digital and social media part 3

Read Sugarman chapters 23-35

Thursday, October 31st: the 1-2-3-4 formula

Friday, November 1st: **In-Class Exercise**

Week 10:

Tuesday, November 5th: **Fun Product Campaign Due**

Thursday, November 7th: presentations

Friday, November 8th: presentations

Week 11:

Tuesday, November 12^h: presentations

Thursday, November 14th: presentations

Friday, November 15th: presentations

Unit 3: Additional Copywriting Considerations

Week 12:

Tuesday, November 19th:

Read Sugarman Epilogue and Appendix A-B

Thursday, November 21st:

Friday, November 22nd: **In-Class Exercise**

Week 13:

Tuesday, November 26th:

Thursday, November 28th: THANKSGIVING

Friday, November 29th: THANKSGIVING

Week 14:

Tuesday, December 3rd:

Read Sugarman Appendix C-D

Thursday, December 5th:

Friday, December 6^h: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Week 15:

Tuesday, December 10th: **Final Major Campaign Due**
presentations
Thursday, December 12th: presentations
Friday, December 13th: presentations

Week 16:

Tuesday, December 17th: presentations
Thursday, December 18th: presentations
Friday, December 20th: presentations

Final Exam

Comm 351 Tuesday, December 17th at 10:15AM