Strategic Communications Campaigns: Event Planning

019:135:001
The University of Iowa
School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Instructor: Heather Spangler

Location: W240 AJB

Time: 3:30-5:20 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays

Office Hours: 2-3 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays in N454 LC and by appointment.

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*Email is the best way to reach me—my voicemail goes unchecked for days.

Course Overview:
Event planning is a growing, changing industry that allows journalists to employ their communication, marketing, social media and project management skills. In this course we will explore the event planning field through speakers, research, and hands-on experiences.

Prerequisite and requirements:
Students must be journalism majors and have completed 019:096 and 019:098. Students must also be willing and able to put in time outside of class to carry out and support classmates in carrying out events.

Readings:
There is not one required text for this course. Students will be divided into teams to focus on specific types of events. Teams will study printed and electronic references relating to their topic within the larger field of event planning, discuss them as a group, and present findings to the class. Supplementary readings are posted to ICON.

Major Assignments:
Additional details about assignments will be given in a timely manner, but here is the gist:

- **Observe professional event:** Each student will attend a medium or large-scale event. You will observe successes and failures of the event, interview three attendees about their experiences, and interview an event organizer about their planning process. You will compile your findings and present then to the class as well as submit your presentation file and additional notes via ICON. (25 points. Due March 5.)
• **Dream job report:** Our Event Planning 101 discussion on Day 1 will introduce you to many fields within event planning. Think about which field might best suit you and your personal interests. Identify a person working in what you feel is a dream job in that field. Interview that person and prepare a written report as well as a brief presentation to share in class. (20 points. Due March 26.)

• **Plan and carry out major event:** We will divide the class into four teams. Each group will take the lead on planning and carrying out an event related to their focus area. I have made arrangements with organizations or entities willing to let our class be involved in their events and will connect you with your clients. You will earn points along the way with presentations of ideas and plans to the class. You will be graded on the event’s success based on a written report you will complete and present orally as well as my observations and surveys to be completed by your classmates and clients. (100 points.)

• **Work day participation:** Each event team is assigned a work day, when they can put the rest of us to work getting ready for their event. You earn 5 points per workday for participating and helping. (15 points total)

• **Attendance & Participation:** 30 points (1 point for each class meeting, plus 3 flex points to reward extra effort). I do take attendance every day.

• **Attend event as support team and evaluator:** In addition to the event you plan, you must attend at least one other event throughout the semester to support your classmates with the work of carrying out the event (as needed and appropriate) as well as to take on the role of an evaluator to add to our class discussion of lessons we can take away from each event. (20 points)

• **Speaker and Client Hosts:** We will have a series of speakers and other guests visit our course throughout the semester. Each guest will have a host or team of hosts who will prepare materials to help the guest feel welcome and ready to work with us, help ensure the guest’s comfort while with us, and thank the guest when our interaction is complete. (15 points)

• **Speaker preparation and response:** You will submit 5 questions for each guest speaker by the start of the class period before their visit via a discussion board, and a 3+ paragraph response to their visit via an ICON dropbox by the beginning of the next class period after their visit. (10 points per guest)

• **Final, solo event plan:** To end our course, you will identify a client in any sector you choose, communicate with the client about their event planning needs or interests, and produce a plan for an event that the client could choose to carry out. You will present this plan in class as well as submit a written plan via ICON for a final grade. Your submission will include notes from your client interview; background information on the client; information about competitors’ events or similar events; specific event plans including venue, guests, vendors, activities, estimated costs, etc.; your plans for promoting the event; how you will use social media throughout the process; and plans for measuring the event’s success. (100 points)

**Grading:**

- 99-100% A+
- 88-89% B+
- 78-79% C+
- 68-69% D+
- 94-98% A
- 84-87% B
- 74-77% C
- 63-67% D
- 90-93% A-
- 80-83% B-
- 70-73% C-
- 60-62% D-
Attendance:
I aim to make each meeting essential and meaningful, so please plan to attend every session or risk missing out on something important. You cannot be successful in this class if you are not consistently present and prepared. Out of respect for your classmates and our schedule, please also arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Failing to do so may impact your grade.

Students who must miss class are accountable for all material presented and assignments given during their absence. It is your responsibility to communicate with me to see what you need to know for the next session and to turn in any work that was due during the missed class period prior to the next meeting. In-class work may not be made up.

Late work:
As journalists, it’s essential that you respect and meet deadlines with no exceptions. I will accept late work only in extreme circumstances, including an utterly debilitating illness or a documented family crisis. It is important that you communicate with me as soon as possible if you feel you will miss turning in an assignment and provide adequate documentation to prove your given excuse.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Policies:

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml].

Academic Fraud
Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Making a Suggestion or Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Accommodations for Disabilities
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at
www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, Part IV, 16. See items e, h, and i.)

Course Objectives/The Iowa Dozen:

We learn to ...

1. Write correctly, clearly and well.
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly.
3. Edit and evaluate carefully.
4. Use media technologies thoughtfully.
5. Apply statistical concepts accurately.

We value ...

6. Free speech and First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups.
7. A diverse global community.
8. Creativity and independence.

We explore ...

10. Theories and concepts.
11. The history, structure and economy of media institutions
12. The role of media in shaping cultures.

Schedule:

Week 1:
Thursday, Jan. 24: 3:30-4:30 Strategic Communications professor candidate presentation. Teams meet and review basic event information, establish preliminary roles.

Week 2:
Tuesday, Jan. 29: CLIENT VISIT: Kathleen Cannon, executive director of Girls on the Run of Johnson County, to discuss her organization’s spring fundraiser, the LUNAFEST film festival. 4:30 CLIENT VISIT: Michelle Buham, program specialist at the Senior Center.
Thursday, Jan. 31: **CLIENT VISIT: Laura McLeRan**, director of presidential outreach and events. Social Media and event planning discussion. Discuss Super Bowl events.

**Week 3:**
Tuesday, Feb. 5: Super Bowl debriefing. **CLIENT VISIT: Rori Carlo**, UI baseball marketing. Finish Social Media discussion.
Thursday, Feb. 7: GOTR and Senior Center teams present initial plans. Event Planning technology discussion.

**Week 4:**
Tuesday, Feb. 12: Baseball and President teams present preliminary plans.
Thursday, Feb. 14: Share professional event observations. Written assignment due on ICON.

**Week 5:**
*Tuesday, Feb. 19: **GUEST SPEAKER: Andre Perry**, the Englert and Mission Creek Festival Thursday, Feb. 21: All teams will meet to brainstorm, discuss and progress their plans. Teams will present informal progress reports to class. GOTR work day.

**Week 6:**
Tuesday, Feb. 26: **GUEST SPEAKER: Bill Nelson**, Director, Center for Student Involvement & Leadership. Senior Center work day.

**Week 7:**
Tuesday, March 5: Prepare for guest speakers. Teams share ideas for incorporating green ideas into events.
Thursday, March 7: **GUEST SPEAKER: Katherine Stuppi**, event planner for Google. Baseball work day.

**Week 8:**
Tuesday, March 12: **GUEST SPEAKER: Ken Aagaard**, UI J-School graduate and executive director of operations at CBS. We will NOT meet in our regular classroom. Meeting location TBD.
Thursday, March 14: All teams will meet to brainstorm, discuss and progress their plans. Teams will present informal progress reports to class. President work day.

**Week 9:**
**SPRING BREAK** March 18-22.

**Week 10:**
Tuesday, March 26: Share Dream Job assignment findings with class. **GUEST SPEAKERS: Kernels staff.**
Week 11:
Tuesday, April 2: Prepare for field trip. Team brainstorming and informal reports.
Thursday, April 4: Field Trip! Visit the Cedar Rapids Kernels.

Week 12:
Tuesday, April 9: Field trip debriefing.
Thursday, April 11: GUEST SPEAKER: Elizabeth Wallace, public relations coordinator at the UI Museum of Art.

Week 13:
Tuesday, April 16: Final projects work day and one-on-one conferences
Thursday, April 18: GOTR group event report. Senior Center group event report. President group event report.

Week 14:
Tuesday, April 23: Final projects work day (continued).
Thursday, April 25: GUEST SPEAKERS: Rob Cline and Erin Donohue of Hancher.
*Friday, April 26: BASEBALL EVENT.

Week 15:
Tuesday, April 30: Baseball event report. Final presentations (5 minutes each).
Thursday, May 2: Final presentations (5 minutes each).

Week 15:
Tuesday, May 7: End of course evaluations.
Thursday, May 9: GUEST SPEAKERS: Quinn Pettifer of the Cedar Rapids downtown district, Nick Arnold of the Iowa City downtown district. We will NOT meet in our regular classroom. Meeting location TBD.

*Week 16: FINALS WEEK: Turn in final projects to ICON.

{{PS: It’s important to be flexible! Please note that this is a tentative schedule. Unplanned opportunities and challenges may require changes.}}