



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
Public Relations and Corporate Communications

## **MPPR-891-02**

### **GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY: MPS-Public Relations and Corporate Communications**

Thursdays; 8 – 10:30 p.m. | Spring 2015

**Instructor:** Carol Blymire

Downtown campus, room C221

- Office hours are by appointment.

#### **COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Thought leadership and personal branding are two essential, yet often ambiguous ingredients in a career strategy. This course will arm students with the resources to identify their personal brand, better understand personal brand values alignment in their career and other areas of their life, and employ personal branding communications strategies in both digital and in-person contexts – including social media platforms and networking opportunities.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Students are required to bring to class a laptop equipped with Microsoft Word or compatible program, as well as the ability to send email and access the Internet to complete specific in-class assignments.

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A brand is the set of expectations, memories, stories and relationships that, taken together, inform a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another. A brand is a promise and is a requirement for differentiation in a crowded marketplace. Products, services, politicians, celebrities, and nations build brands to distinguish themselves from competitors to increase mindshare and market share.

So, what's a personal brand? Your personal brand helps build trusted, valuable relationships and allows you to make a meaningful difference in the world. Your brand is being who you are with distinction, relevance, and consistency. Your brand consists of reputation and reach, and must be authentic and consistent. Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room. Whether in your professional life or your social network, an authentic, trusted personal brand is important to success.

This course will prepare students to identify and strengthen their personal brand by developing a clear value proposition, setting goals, and taking risks that can lead to landing a dream job, getting a promotion or raise, increasing confidence, and being a genuinely awesome human.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION, continued:** We will work together as a class, in small groups, and in 1:1 sessions on defining and building your personal brand. As the course progresses, we will have



subject-matter expert guest speakers who will share their insights on personal branding. You are encouraged to come to class prepared to ask questions, work on projects alone and with your classmates, and be open to learning, developing, and sharing best practices and ideas.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- define their personal brand;
- have the foundation upon which to build on their mission, talents, and skills; and
- be confident in their personal brand and understand how to effectively communicate who they are and what they want.

### **REQUIRED READING:**

*Brand You: Turn Your Unique Talents Into a Winning Formula*; John Purkiss and David Royston-Lee (ISBN: 978-0273777694; \$18.98 paperback)

*Be Your Own Brand: Achieve More of What You Want by Being More of Who You Are*; David McNally and Karl D. Speak (ISBN: 978-1605098104; \$13.69 paperback)

Please come to class each week conversant in current events (news and popular culture). This means scanning reputable news outlets (*The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, etc.) as well as popular culture media outlets of your choosing.

In addition, we will refer to the items below (and others to be added later) throughout the semester:

[What is Your Personal Brand?](#) (Inc.)

[The Brand Called You](#) (Fast Company)

[Needles, Haystacks, and Magnetism](#) (Seth Godin's blog)

[The Personal Brand Myth: Becoming More Human and Less Machine](#) (Medium)

[Chris Hardwick 2.0: How the Talking Dead Host Rebranded Himself as a Nerd for All Platforms](#) (Fast Company)

[Five Unexpected Ways to Build Your Personal Brand](#) (Forbes)

[Personal Branding is a Leadership Requirement, Not a Self-Promotion Campaign](#) (Forbes)

[Your Future Employer Is Watching You Online. You Should Be, Too](#) (Harvard Business Review)

[25 Ways to Create Highly Shareable Content](#) (Ragan Communications)

[Why Flexibility Is Your Key to Personal Branding Success](#) (Entrepreneur)

[Leadership and the Power of Listening](#) (n2Growth blog)

### **ATTENDANCE:**



Your physical presence in the classroom is required, and is indispensable to building your personal brand. Students are expected to be in class on time and remain for the duration of the class time; more than one late arrival or early departure will result in a 5-point deduction in your final grade.

In the case of an absence, the student is responsible for securing notes, announcements, and assignments from a classmate; the instructor will not provide this information.

Missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). Absences for classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course.

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE, CLASS PARTICIPATION, AND OTHER GUIDELINES**

A successful class depends on the active engagement of all students. Students should turn off all cell phones, pagers or other communication devices while in class. Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions. What happens in class stays in class unless you receive permission from the instructor to share something.

**PREPARATION AND READINESS:** Students are expected to:

- come to class having read the assignments;
- contribute meaningfully to class discussions;
- talk about and do work on their personal brand;
- be open to feedback and guidance; and
- be ready to practice in real life what they learn in class.

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** Classes will feature lectures, discussions, and in-class exercises and assignments. Later in the semester, there will also be 1:1 consultation, brainstorming, and feedback sessions with me. Because building your personal brand is so *personal*, it's important to me that we set aside time for each of you to work with me individually on your goals and tasks to make real progress toward understanding and developing your personal brand, as well as delivering a final project that has meaningful real-world value that you can continue to work on after the semester comes to an end. Coming to these 1:1 sessions prepared and ready to work will be considered will contribute toward your "Participation" grade. I also have an expectation that you'll support one another's work, so we'll have in-class collaboration sessions on specific topics.

**ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:** Assignment due dates are listed in the "Weekly Class Schedule" later in this syllabus. One point will be deducted for each day your assignment is late.



**ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING:** Weekly homework assignments (usually started in class following the lecture and discussion) and the Spring Semester Personal Brand Objectives are to be completed in the body of an email. All assignments related to the Final Project should be in 1.5-line-spaced 12-pt. sans serif font (e.g. Calibri, Arial) with 1" margins. Please proofread (or have a classmate or someone else you trust proofread) for typos, grammar, and overall clarity as sloppy work will have a negative impact on your grade.

**FINAL PROJECT:**

Your final project is a written personal brand platform and strategy, which will also outline a forward-looking 18-month action plan (with defined goals, objectives, strategies, tactics) for how you will manage your personal brand. More specific details about the guidelines and elements required in the final project will be provided on the first day of class.

**GRADING SUMMARY:**

Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, and F. There are no grades of C+, C-, or D. The numeric breakdown for final grades in the class is as follows:

A	100-93	B-	82-80
A-	92-90	C	79-70
B+	89-88	F	69-0
B	87-83		

Point values for each component of the class, including all assignments and participation:

Class Participation, Collaboration, Assignment Completion, & Problem Solving	50
Final Project Mid-point Draft	35
Spring Personal Brand Objective 1	25
Spring Personal Brand Objective 2	25
Final Project/18-month plan	<u>65</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>
	(÷2 for your letter grade; see above)

The instructor will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor final grade.



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### UNIVERSITY RESOURCES:

Georgetown offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed on main campus or at the downtown location:

MPS Writing Resource Program  
202-687-4246  
<http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>

Academic Resource Center  
202-687-8354 | [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)  
<http://ldss.georgetown.edu/>

Counseling and Psychiatric Services  
202-687-6985 | <http://caps.georgetown.edu/>

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:

Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (202-687-8354; [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu); <http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm>) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

### GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM:

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code. The Honor Code pledge follows:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

### PLAGIARISM:

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in journalism, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs at <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing and the need to credit, check out <http://www.plagiarism.org>.



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**SYLLABUS MODIFICATION:**

The syllabus may change to accommodate discussion of emerging topics. Also, the schedules of guest speakers may require some shifting of the agenda. The instructor will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.



## WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK	DISCUSSION TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
<p><b>Week 1</b>  <b>1/8/15</b></p>	<p>Introduction to Personal Branding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is personal branding?</li> <li>• What we're going to cover in this class</li> <li>• Discussion of Spring Branding Objectives</li> <li>• Discussion of Final Project</li> </ul> <p>Your Personal Brand: Who am I?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture and discussion</li> <li>• In-class exercise</li> <li>• Homework</li> </ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Why are you taking this class?" exercise</li> <li>• "Who am I?" exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 1/11 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media footprint email</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 1/15:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read this entire syllabus</li> <li>• Think about Spring Personal Brand Objectives</li> <li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapters 1-3, 7</li> <li>• Read <i>Be Your Own Brand</i> Introduction and chapters 1-3</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">What is Your Personal Brand?</a> (Inc.)</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">The Brand Called You</a> (Fast Company)</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">Needles, Haystacks, and Magnetism</a> (Seth Godin's blog)</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">The Personal Brand Myth: Becoming More Human and Less Machine</a> (Medium)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b>  <b>1/15/15</b></p>	<p>Perception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture and discussion</li> <li>• In-class exercise</li> <li>• Homework</li> </ul> <p>Follow-up discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spring Branding Objectives</li> <li>• Final Project</li> </ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception exercises</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 1/18 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spring Personal Brand Objectives</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 1/22:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapters 4-5</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">Chris Hardwick 2.0: How the Talking Dead Host Rebranded Himself as a Nerd for All Platforms</a> (Fast Company)</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on "Who am I" exercise</li> </ul>



<p><b>Week 3</b> <b>1/22/15</b></p>	<p>Identifying Your Talents, Skills, Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture and discussion</li><li>• In-class exercise</li><li>• Homework</li></ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talents, Skills, Values exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 1/29:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapter 6</li></ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback on Perception exercise</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 4</b> <b>1/29/15</b></p>	<p>Your Personal Brand Mission, Goals, and Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture and discussion</li><li>• In-class exercise</li><li>• Homework</li></ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin Mission, Goals, and Objectives exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/1 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed Mission, Goals, and Objectives exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/5:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <i>Be Your Own Brand</i> chapters 4-6</li><li>• Read <a href="#">Five Unexpected Ways to Build Your Personal Brand</a> (Forbes)</li></ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback on Talents, Skills, Values exercise</li><li>• Feedback on Spring Branding Goals decision</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>2/5/15</b></p>	<p>Authenticity and Your Personal Brand Promise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture and discussion</li><li>• In-class exercise</li><li>• Homework</li></ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal Brand Promise exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/8 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exercise H beginning on Page 60 of <i>Brand You</i></li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/12:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapters 8-10</li></ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback on Mission, Goals, Objectives exercise</li></ul>





<p><b>Week 6</b>  <b>2/12/15</b></p>	<p>Your Personal Brand Story, Part 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture and discussion</li> <li>• In-class exercise</li> <li>• Homework</li> </ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises J, K. and L in <i>Brand You</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/15 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises J, K. and L in <i>Brand You</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/19:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapters 11-14</li> <li>• Read <i>Be Your Own Brand</i> chapters 7-8</li> <li>• Read <a href="#">Personal Branding is a Leadership Requirement, Not a Self-Promotion Campaign</a> (Forbes)</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Mission, Goals, and Objectives exercise</li> <li>• Feedback on Exercise H in <i>Brand You</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 7</b>  <b>2/19/15</b></p>	<p>Your Personal Brand Story, Part 2  <i>Panel discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class time to work on Spring Personal Brand Objectives status update and Final Project Mid-Point Draft</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 2/26:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapter 16</li> <li>• Spring Personal Brand Objectives status update email</li> <li>• Final Project Mid-point Draft</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Exercises J, K, and L in <i>Brand You</i></li> </ul>



<p><b>Week 8</b> <b>2/26/15</b></p>	<p>Defining Your Network and Managing Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture and discussion</li><li>• In-class exercise</li><li>• Homework</li></ul>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Networking exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/1 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specifics handed out in class</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/5:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <a href="#">Your Future Employer Is Watching You Online. You Should Be, Too</a> (Harvard Business Review)</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 9</b> <b>3/5/15</b></p>	<p>Crisis Management <i>Panel discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p> <p>1:1 Consulting Sessions (times to be assigned)</p> <p>In-class working time</p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crisis exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/8 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crisis exercise</li></ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/19:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <i>Brand You</i> chapters 15, 17-19</li><li>• Read <i>Be Your Own Brand</i> chapter 9</li></ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback on Final Project Mid-point Draft</li><li>• Feedback on Networking exercise</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 10</b> <b>3/12/15</b> <b>NO CLASS</b> <b>Spring Break</b></p>		



<p><b>Week 11</b>  <b>3/19/15</b></p>	<p>Social Media and Your Personal Brand  <i>Panel discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p> <p>1:1 Consulting Sessions          (times to be assigned)</p> <p>In-class working time</p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/22 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/26:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <a href="#">25 Ways to Create Highly Shareable Content</a> (Ragan Communications)</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Crisis exercise</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 12</b>  <b>3/26/15</b></p>	<p>Content Strategy and Community Building  <i>Panel discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p> <p>11:1 Consulting Sessions          (times to be assigned)</p> <p>In-class working time</p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content strategy exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 3/29 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content Strategy exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 4/9:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Be Your Own Brand</i> chapter 10</li> <li>Read <i>Brand You</i> chapter 21 and Conclusion</li> <li>Read <a href="#">Why Flexibility Is Your Key to Personal Branding Success</a> (Entrepreneur)</li> <li>Read <a href="#">Leadership and the Power of Listening</a> (n2Growth blog)</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Social media exercise</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 13</b>  <b>4/2/15</b>  <b>NO CLASS</b>  <b>Easter Break</b></p>		



<b>Week 14</b> <b>4/9/14</b>	<p>The Importance of Listening and Feedback          Monitoring Your Personal Brand          Evolving Your Personal Brand  <i>Panel Discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p> <p>1:1 Consulting Sessions          (times to be assigned)</p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening, Monitoring, Evolving exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Homework Due 4/12 at 5 p.m.:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening, Monitoring, Evolving exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Content Strategy exercise</li> </ul>
<b>Week 15</b> <b>4/16/14</b>	<p>Your Personal Brand in the Real World  <i>Panel Discussion: Guest speakers TBA</i></p> <p>1:1 Consulting Sessions          (times to be assigned)</p> <p>In-class working time</p>	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-panel discussion</li> </ul> <p><u>Returned to You:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Listening, Monitoring, Evolving exercise</li> </ul>
<b>Week 16</b> <b>4/23/15</b>	<p>1:1 Consulting Sessions          (times to be assigned)</p> <p>In-class work time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spring Branding Objectives</li> <li>Final Project</li> </ul>	<p><u>Homework Due 5/7:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Status Report on Spring Branding Objectives</li> <li>Final Project</li> </ul>
<b>Week 17</b> <b>4/30/15</b> <b>NO CLASS</b> <b>Study week</b>		



<b>Week 18</b> <b>5/7/15</b>	In-class work time and proofreading time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spring Branding Objectives</li><li>• Final Project</li></ul>	Final Status Report on Spring Branding Objectives (submitted via email)  Final Project due (submitted in print and via email)
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