



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
Integrated Marketing Communications

**Georgetown University, MPS IMC| Fall, 2016**

## **MPMC-704-01: Content Strategy**

**Class Meets:** Mondays, 5:20pm – 7:50pm

**Class Location:** 640 Mass. Ave., Washington, DC 20001

**Professor:** Franklin Parrish

**Office Hours:** Arranged by appointment.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The relationship between brand and consumer has changed. Marketing communications has become less about paid advertising and more about providing value-added content to attract and retain customers. Thanks to social media, the consumer has more access to information and more power to choose brands that align to their values as well as provide a material benefit. As a result of this new landscape, brands must be able to engage in conversations on topics that engage their audiences and use content as a vehicle to deepen those relationships.

New digital channels expand the opportunity to engage and persuade audiences, but also create the need for large amounts of new content that aligns with and reinforces what the brand stands for. Students in this course will learn to create a coherent content strategy that reflects a deep understanding of audience values and the brand story. They will also learn how to create a cross-channel content plan and build a portfolio of content samples for Web stories, social media, email newsletters, and other channels.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Construct a brand story/territories from a deep understanding of value propositions + brand attributes.
- Craft personas based on audience demographics, psychographics, behaviors, and values that affect content preference and consumption.
- Explain brand storytelling in the digital space.
- Identify the key content types, their strengths, and limitations.
- Develop a content calendar reflecting key content themes.
- Create a content campaign brief that informs the creative output.

### **ATTENDANCE**

In-class discussion and practice are essential to mastering the content of this course. Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. If you are unable to attend a class or arrive before it begins, you are responsible for notifying me via email prior to the start of class. 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 from 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.

**10% of your grade is based on class participation. I expect you to come to class having read any assigned material and prepared to engage in discussion and ask questions. Simply attending class only meets minimal expectations for class participation. Attendance for a guest speaker is mandatory. Please note that the majority of assignments will be done in class, so attendance is critical.**

## **WORK SUBMITTED**

**Please include your name, course number, assignment title, page numbers, and the due date on all written submissions. Bring a hard copy of your assignment to class the night it is due and post electronic copies on Blackboard prior to the beginning of class as well.**

You are preparing to enter a deadline-driven field! LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PENALIZED. All assignments must be turned in by the start of class on the due date. Assignments received after the deadlines are considered late, and 5 points will be deducted for each day it is late. Grammar and spelling count, too.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

- All cell phones must be silenced during class. Laptops may be used for note taking. Consistent disengagement with class discussion will result in lower participation grades.
- I expect classroom etiquette to be businesslike and professional at all times.
  - o I will not offer incomplete grades, except in the most exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances. Job requirements do not qualify.
  - o You are responsible for classroom information and instructions, whether you are present in class or not. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to obtain class notes. Please let me know as far in advance as possible if you will miss a class.
  - o Please ask questions and offer opinions during class. Chances are if you're wondering about something, at least one of your colleagues will be also. Always feel empowered to raise your hand and voice your question. Use each question as an opportunity to apply what we are learning about critical thinking and presentation skills.
  - o **Please do not text in class.**

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

The resources for this course include articles, book excerpts, case studies, multimedia, RFPs and two key books. The readings are selected to give you a solid foundation for understanding and internalizing the coursework.

Lerner, Scott (2013) *Building Better Brands: A Comprehensive Guide to Brand Strategy and Identity Development*. Blue Ash, OH: HOW Books  
ISBN-13: 978-14403-3143-5 | \$39.99

Fog, K., Budtz, C., Yakaboylu, B., (2010) *Storytelling: Branding in Practice*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Springer; 2nd ed. 2010 edition (October 8, 2010)  
ISBN-10: 3540883487 | ISBN-13: 978-3540883487 | \$39.05

Mootee, Idris, *60 Minute brand Strategist: The Essential Brand Book for Marketing Professionals* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.  
ISBN-10: 1118625161 | ISBN-13: 978-1118625163 | \$24.04

*(Note: Federal law requires that we list ISBN numbers and price for every book.)*

All articles, book excerpts, cases, and multimedia listed on the course schedule will be distributed in advance, via the class Blackboard group. Readings not included in the initial syllabus will be provided later in the semester, so we can review real-time cases and current events.

### **Recommended Readings**

Miller, Carol Handler, *Digital Storytelling: A Creator's Guide To Interactive Entertainment*  
Publisher: Focal Press; 3 edition (May 14, 2014)  
ISBN-10: 0415836948  
ISBN-13: 978-0415836944

### **LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR MPMC**

<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/researchcourseguides>  
<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/MPMC>

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

You are expected to submit work on time and of high quality. Please refer to the course schedule and plan your timetable for completing assignments in advance. I encourage you to actively ask questions prior to submitting any assignment. As long as you submit your assignments for review (with a specific question in mind) at least three (3) business days before the assignment is due, I would be happy to review your specific question and discuss it with you. Feedback on all final assignments will be provided in a timely manner; no more than two (2) weeks after the assignment is turned in. Feedback may be oral or written. Rubrics will be distributed for key assignments.

**Please note that the majority of assignments will be done in class, so attendance is critical.**

All grading criteria, including page length and essential content, will be distributed in advance and discussed in class.

(I) =Individual Assignment (G)=Group Assignment

#### **(I) Persona Development (20 points; 10% of final grade)**

Please choose three (3) companies that are in the same industry (airline, carmaker, hospitality, etc.) Based on your learning, create the target personas for each brand. Please make each company distinct enough to make creating the persona easier. For example, choosing McDonald's, Hardee's, and Burger King will not produce distinct personas.

#### **(I) Brand Attribute Development (20 points; 10% of final grade)**

Analyze what you believe are each of your three (3) brand's key attributes. Be prepared to discuss your opinion in depth.

#### **(I) The Brand Story + Value Proposition (20 points; 10% of final grade)**

Develop brand stories in the Klaus Fog Fairy Tale Model of the two (2) brands for which you developed personas. How will this brand use its attributes as a means to help the "Hero" accomplish his/her goal? We will turn these into value props as well.

#### **(G) The Content Campaign Brief (50 points; 25% of final grade)**

This is the most critical assignment in this course. Your group project begins with the choice of

one of the brands for which you developed personas, attributes, and value propositions. Develop a content campaign brief that will identify the audience, the goal of the communication, and key messaging to be produced based on the intersection of the brand story and consumer insights. You will also be asked to develop your platform strategy/content types based on your knowledge of audience preferences. This is an in-class assignment; you will be evaluated before you leave.

**(G) Content Calendar (40 points; 20% of final grade)**

The group work continues with story ideas for your content and the means by which these stories will be deployed, listed by channel, story topic and platform. Additive or subtractive? Multi-episode arc or super snackable? The choice is yours of what will get your audience to share, click, or watch.

**(G) Content Samples (30 points; 15% of final grade)**

Based on your development of the brief and the content calendar, prepare a description of the samples, including key messaging for each type of content that your group believes is needed to accomplish your goals. If your content includes video, a one-sentence treatment is satisfactory.

**(I) Attendance & Participation (20 points; 10% of final grade)**

Knowledge of what is going on in the industry is very important to your career development. You are expected to bring in, each week, actual content from the companies that you selected in week two. Content can be screenshots of Facebook posts, tweets, videos, or anything that you find online from your selected brands. If you select a variety of content types, putting together your final project will be that much easier. Please be prepared to discuss them in class.

Other forms of class participation will include but not be limited to assigned reading, lecture material, and discussion of class assignments.

**GRADING**

Graduate course grades include A, A<sup>-</sup>, B<sup>+</sup>, B, B<sup>-</sup>, C, and F. **There are no grades of C<sup>+</sup>, C<sup>-</sup>, or D.**

Your course grade will be based on the following:

<b>Persona Development</b>	<b>20 pts.</b>
<b>Brand Attribute Development</b>	<b>20 pts.</b>
<b>The Brand Story</b>	<b>20 pts.</b>
<b>The Content Campaign Brief</b>	<b>50 pts.</b>
<b>Content Calendar</b>	<b>40 pts.</b>
<b>Content Samples</b>	<b>30 pts.</b>
<b>Attendance and Participation</b>	<b>20 pts.</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200 pts.</b>

**Grading Metrics:**

Students will have the opportunity to earn a **total of 200 points** this semester. Please reference the grading scale and assignments below:

**Grading Scale:**

**A      100 - 93**

<b>A-</b>	<b>92 - 90</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>89 - 88</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>87 - 83</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>82 - 80</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>79 - 70</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>69 and below</b>

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

## **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/>
- Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)  
(202) 687-4798  
<https://ideaa.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 the workplace, 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>.

### **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.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE/TOPIC	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES
Class 1 August 31, 2016			Introduction to learning objectives Syllabus and class policy review Goals and objective discussion Create Teams Course overview and expectation setting
Class 2 September 12, 2016 <b>Introduction to Content Strategy: The New Marketing Landscape</b>			Lecture on the changing digital marketing landscape
Class 3 September 19, 2016 <b>Knowing The Audience: They Won't Click If They Don't Care Pt.1</b>	Brand Gap Part 2		Lecture and discussion on the determining factors that make up audience content preferences  <b>In class: Select two (2) companies to profile</b>
Class 4 September 26, 2016 <b>Knowing The Audience: They Won't Click If They Don't Care Pt. 2</b>		Content sample from your two companies	Continuing lecture and discussion on the determining factors that make up audience content preferences  Jungian archetypes for consumers  Examination of VALS belief system model
Class 5 October 3, 2016			Guest Speaker on Consumer insights Persona Development demonstration + Workshop

<p><b>Building The Brand: Personality, Pillars And Promise</b></p>	<p>Mootee: 60 Minute Brand Strategist</p> <p>Brand Gap: Part 1</p>	<p>Content sample from your companies</p> <p><b>Persona Development</b></p>	<p>Discussion and lecture on brand territories, value propositions, intangibles, and personality that drive content style and strategy</p> <p>Jungian archetypes for brands</p> <p><b>In class: Persona Development discussion</b></p> <p><b>In Class: Select the archetype for each of your businesses</b></p>
<p>Class 6 October 17, 2016</p>		<p>Content sample from your companies</p>	<p>Guest Speaker on brand development</p> <p><b>Brand territories, attribute + Value proposition demonstration</b></p>
<p>Class 7 October 24, 2016</p> <p><b>Telling the Story: Content in the Digital space</b></p>	<p>Fog: Chapter 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8</p> <p>Brand Gap Part 3</p>	<p>Content sample from your companies</p> <p><b>Brand territories, attribute + Value proposition</b></p>	<p>Understanding storytelling as a branding tool</p> <p>The Fairy Tale Model: Developing the brand story</p> <p>Additive and subtractive story telling techniques</p>
<p>Class 8 October 31, 2016</p> <p><b>Telling the Story: Content in the Digital space</b></p>		<p>Content sample from your companies</p>	<p><b>In class: Brand territories, attribute + Value proposition discussion</b></p> <p><b>In class: The Brand Stories of your selected companies demonstration</b></p>
<p>Class 9 November 7, 2016</p> <p><b>Types of Content: Fine-Tuning Your Approach</b></p>		<p>Content sample from your companies</p> <p><b>The Brand Stories of your selected companies</b></p>	<p>Presenters: Guest Speaker: Amy Webber, Senior Digital Producer, E!</p> <p>Discussion: Producing video content for digital consumption</p> <p>Identifying the major content types and understanding/when how to apply them to support your brand story/promise</p>



			<b>In class: Brand Stories Discussion Select brands for group projects</b>
Class 10 November 14, 2016  <b>Pulling It Together: Creating The Strategy, Brief, And The Content Calendar</b>		Content sample from one of your three companies	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing your content strategy</li> <li>• Preparing your content calendar</li> <li>• Writing the content campaign brief</li> <li>• Detailing your primary considerations—medium, objective, KPIs, team</li> </ul>
Class 11 November 21, 2016  <b>Content Best Practices</b>		Content sample from one of your three companies	Guest speaker on Social Media Best practices
Class 12 November 28, 2016  <b>In Class Workday</b>		Content sample from one of your three companies	<b>In class: Content creative brief development and discussion</b>
Class 13 December 5, 2016  <b>Workshop</b>		Content sample from one of your three companies	<b>In class: Develop content calendar and samples</b>
Class 14 December 12, 2016  <b>Presentations</b>		Revised content campaign brief Content calendar for one quarter Sample content items	<b>Presentations of your brief, calendar, and sample content items and a discussion on how they support your brand story</b>