



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
Integrated Marketing Communications

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, MPS IMC | FALL 2016

## **MPMC-900-01: IMC Capstone**

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

Faculty: Sarita Bhargava

Office Hours: By appointment

***\* At the beginning of the semester, Sarita Bhargava will review the Georgetown framework, meet with individual students, give feedback, grade assignments, correspond via email, and advise students on the successful completion of all course assignments.***

**The grading panel for your final plan and presentation will include  
Senior Associate Dean Keyes and Sarita Bhargava**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

During this final course, students will apply the comprehensive skills they have built throughout their study of the concept and practice of integrated marketing communications (IMC). After identifying and securing a company or organization of their choosing, students will respond to a marketing communications challenge by creating a well-researched, creative, integrated plan that exemplifies their development as IMC professionals. Students will be able to choose clients based on their personal interests or focused on continuing the social impact mission of the program. Consumer research is the heart of the IMC planning process, and students are required to develop their creative insights based on primary and secondary research. Throughout the semester, multiple forms of assessment — including a quick-fire challenge, written projects, an ethical response paper, a final plan, and a strategy pitch — track and evaluate each student's level of competency in all of the IMC program learning goals.

The capstone experience is intended to ensure you have the strategic skills and confidence necessary to be a leader in IMC and provide a unique networking and career-enhancing opportunity. In addition to the minimum, cumulative grade point average of 3.0 required for graduation from the MPS IMC program, you must receive a minimum grade of a B in the capstone course to graduate. Students with a 3.0 cumulative GPA, who receive a final grade of a B- or below may receive one opportunity to retake the course, if approved by the senior associate dean.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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

1. Apply strategic, analytic, and creative marketing communication thought and skill to complex marketing challenges.
2. Create and defend a fully integrated marketing communications plan, representative of industry best practices, trends, and tools.
3. Illustrate a commitment to their personal code of ethics when responding to ethical dilemmas.
4. Demonstrate professional leadership characteristics exhibited by innovators in the field in the areas of project management and client communication.

## ATTENDANCE/CLASS PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to attend every class and individual advising session and arrive on time. If you are detained from attending a class or arriving on time, you are responsible for notifying your advisor via email prior to the start of class. Absence at an individual advisor meeting will be tracked for attendance as all other class meetings. Due to the high number of working practitioners in the program, professional obligations do not qualify as emergencies. If you miss a class for an unexcused reason, attendance credit will **not** be given, even if the lecture is captured by video recording.

**Attendance is part of your Class Participation grade and is calculated by two requirements:** 1) coming to class and meeting with your faculty at the agreed upon times and 2) emailing your updated plan 48 hours in advance of your meeting with your faculty member. You are required to attend (in person or remotely if arranged in advance) your individual meetings and you must send tangible (written or electronic) progress to discuss related to your plan 48 hours in advance of your meeting.

**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.**

## COURSE POLICIES

- A successful class depends on the active engagement of all students. **Students should turn off all cell phones 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 professor or advisor to share something.
- You are responsible for classroom information and instructions, **whether you are present in class or not.** If you must miss a class (see "Attendance/Class Participation," above), it is your responsibility to make arrangements to obtain class notes from a colleague in class. All class slides will be posted on CANVAS.
- If you are not present for an in-class activity, no makeup will be given, except in cases of documented emergencies.
- Incomplete grades will not be offered, except in the most exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances. Job requirements do not qualify.
- Students are encouraged to ask questions 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.

## WORK SUBMITTED

Your assignments should meet Georgetown University's standard of excellence. Please follow these guidelines for all written assignments:

- Title your electronic files with *[Your Last Name][Assignment Name]*, assignment title and date in the top left of the first page.
- Use no smaller than 11-point and no larger than 12-point, plain font, no larger than 1" margins, and page numbering (for pages 2+).
- If necessary, reference your sources using documentary-note style with footnotes or endnotes. AP Style Guide is preferred. If you do not reference your work, you run the risk of plagiarizing.
- Consider the tone and formality of the assignments. Avoid contractions, slang, fragments or jargon.
- Proofread your work carefully. Do not undermine your good work by having it marred by errors in spelling, usage, grammar and formatting. Your work is graded on both the content and your ability to express yourself in a polished and professional manner. Use other classmates and/or the MPS Writing Resource Program (see "University Resources," below) to ensure you are submitting your best work.

- **Late submissions will result in deductions of 5 percent per day.** That means if the assignment was due via email at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, anything submitted after 5 p.m. gets a 5 percent deduction from the grade it would have otherwise earned; anything received after 5 p.m. on Thursday gets a 10 percent deduction, etc.

## REQUIRED READING

Please arrive to class on the first day, having read the following book (we will not review individual chapters in class):

- Lawrence Ang. (2014). Principles of Integrated Marketing Communications. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9781107703445 (print = \$119.75; digital = \$88.00)
- Read Adweek.com newsletter

## CLIENT SELECTION

Networking is an integral factor for a successful career. Thinking strategically about a future employer or areas of expertise you would like to gain will help you select your client for capstone. **If you prefer to use your capstone experience to impact the nonprofit community, we have a database for your use. Contact Bridget Pooley, Program Manager in the Center for Social Impact Communication, at [btp7@georgetown.edu](mailto:btp7@georgetown.edu) for questions or to express your interest in collaborating with a nonprofit or responsible business in our database.**

On the first day of class, each student is expected to arrive with a capstone client selected. Since you will be actively collaborating with your client throughout the semester, you should select a client based one of the following criteria:

- you want to consider the organization for future employment
- you want to network with the organization
- you are passionate about the organization's mission

After an initial discussion with your client, **you will give a 30-second summary of the client's name, your contact, and the organization's challenge with you on the first day of class.** Below are a few general guidelines on the requirements for your client and their challenge.

Your capstone client must be:

1. Accessible and willing to commit the required amount of time to your project
2. A key person (senior manager/director, manager) within the organization who has longevity in the company/organization and a basic understanding of communications
3. Willing to provide access to key marketing information and metrics, research, and corporate materials
4. Available to interact with your individual advisor on an as needed basis
5. Involved in providing feedback during the planning process
6. Able to participate in the identification of the communication challenges/opportunities
7. Committed to the value of communication and open to implementing the proposed plan

Their marketing communications challenge should be:

1. Relevant to the business goal of the company/organization
2. Attainable and measurable
3. Complex and contemporary enough to inspire a strategic and creative campaign

If your client has any of these characteristics, they will not be a good fit for capstone:

1. Client does not understand the marketing or marketing communications function or considers marketing communications as a service line function
2. Client does not have any business infrastructure
3. Client does not have any primary or secondary research or metrics they use to make or shape decisions
4. All of client's funding will run out in the next three months or less

5. Client currently employs student, including these work arrangements: consultant, intern or fellow
6. Client's campaign budget is less than \$2,000
7. Client's product/service has not launched yet or does not have a website or the company has less than three employees (*in some cases this is allowable with special approval from the Professor*)

**Preparing for your first prospective client meeting:** To provide strategic counsel to your client and maximize your interaction as a networking or future employment opportunity, you must first understand your client's business and their needs. If you schedule an in-person meeting with your client, arrive at your meeting dressed in business attire. For all client meetings, whether in-person or via telephone, you should be prepared with: (1) an understanding of your contact's background; (2) an outline of prepared questions; and (3) a review of the client's industry/business (competitive landscape, trends, audience) and any publicly available marketing communications materials (e.g., website, ads, social media, annual report, press) before your first interaction; so you can get the most out of your time with your client.

Remember to close your first meeting with next steps, ask if you can follow-up with questions in the near future, and send a thank you note or email to your client. Below you will find suggested questions to guide your discussion. Remember to refer to the client selection and challenge requirements in the syllabus prior to meeting with your client.

Suggested Interview Prompts:

1. Please provide a brief history of your organization, your mission, and the various audiences you serve.
2. What business opportunities and challenges does your organization currently face?
3. How do you see marketing communications addressing those?
4. Do you have a marketing communications plan in place? If so, please briefly describe your plan.
5. If you do not have one in place, how will an IMC plan help your organization reach your goals?
6. How do you determine success for your organization and for marketing communications?
7. Who is your target market and how are you perceived in the market?
8. If approved by the faculty, how do you hope your organization will benefit from collaborating with a Georgetown MPS IMC student?
9. In what ways do you anticipate I, as a Georgetown MPS IMC student, will benefit from collaborating with your organization?
10. Do you have a style guide in place; if yes, can you please provide it to me?
11. Please provide me with samples of your marketing materials; they will help me better understand your work and how you currently communicate. (Samples can include website links, media kits, press releases, communications plans, brochures, etc.)

#### **CLIENT APPROVAL**

Our goal is for your clients to be approved before the start of class, so you can focus your energy on producing your final plan throughout the semester. **To request client approval, please email your responses to the prompts below to Sarita Bhargava and the IMC Capstone email account:**

1. Your client's name, location, and website address
2. Your client contact, their title, the number of times you've corresponded with the client, and whether the contact has committed to participating as a client
3. The IMC challenge
4. A brief statement explaining why your chosen organization is a suitable capstone client (and any remaining concerns)
5. A brief overview of what your client hopes to gain from this collaborative experience
6. Please confirm that your client does not meet any of these criteria:
7. Client does not understand the marketing or marketing communications function or considers marketing communications as a service line function
8. Client does not have any business infrastructure

9. Client does not have any primary or secondary research or metrics they use to make or shape decisions
10. All of client's funding will run out in the next three months or less
11. Client currently employs student, including these work arrangements: consultant, intern or fellow
12. Client's campaign budget is less than \$2,000
13. Client's product/service has not launched yet or does not have a website or the company has less than three employees (*in some cases this is allowable with special approval from the Professor*)

You should request client approval no later than two weeks before the first class meeting. Once approved, you will have your client sign a client agreement. Then, you will share your signed client agreement with your faculty member. Your faculty member will correspond with your client to thank them for their participation and provide an extra point of contact if needed.

*\*If you do not obtain client approval by week three of the course, you will be advised to drop the class, given the schedule of client-related assignments.*

After the close of the semester, you will receive feedback on your written plan and pitch, which you will use to revise your materials for delivery and presentation to your client. **Although you will not execute the campaign, you will be responsible for revising and giving all of the final plan documents to your client within the month following your final capstone class.** If requested by your client, your advisor will also send their feedback on your final plan to your client, so they receive an objective perspective on the rigor of your plan. Be sure to set clear expectations for how you will collaborate with your client in the planning process and the contents of the final plan they will receive.

## ASSIGNMENTS

You are expected to submit high quality, client-ready work, on time. All assignments are due by the beginning of class on the due date specified in the schedule, unless otherwise noted. **You will submit all written assignments via CANVAS.**

All students will be provided with grading rubrics for the following major assignments: outline, final plan, and final pitch. Students who earn a failing grade on assignments other than the final plan, will be granted the opportunity to redo the assignment to earn an average of their initial and final score. However, the final grade on the assignment cannot exceed a "C" letter grade, even if the new average is above a "C." Below you will find descriptions of all the course assignments:

*Quick-fire Challenge (25 points):* Students will respond to a written scenario that demonstrates their competency of the principles of an integrated marketing communication plan. You will be graded on your framework, use of insights, plausibility of your recommendations, concise writing, strategic thinking, and creativity.

*Ethical Response Paper (30 points):* You will be presented with a situation depicting an ethical dilemma, typical in marketing. You will apply the personal code of ethics you developed earlier in the program in the Ethics course, by writing your response to, reflection of, and examination of the situation.

*Midterm Plan Outline (70 points):* You will submit an outline (based on the Georgetown framework) of your approach to your client's challenge. Your plan will convey information that includes an understanding of the business issues, the audience and the assessment of the marketing communications mix based on goals and objectives. The document should synthesize your thinking, demonstrate your use of research to make decisions, and convey the strength and cohesion of the recommendations you plan to make in your final plan.

*Final Plan (150 points):* You will use the feedback from your outline to complete a comprehensive, client-ready, stand-alone 30-page power point presentation that incorporates current trends and tools. The plan

should demonstrate your professional and academic knowledge and experience in a proposal that demonstrates the use of research to make informed decisions about the objectives, audience, strategy, creative and marketing communications mix.

*Final Pitch (40 points):* You will give a 5-7 minute pitch of your final plan to your colleagues and a panel that includes the professor and advisors.

*Class Participation (15 points):* As previously stated under “Attendance/Class Participation,” you are required to attend (in person or remotely if arranged in advance) your individual meetings and you must send tangible (written or electronic) progress to discuss related to your plan 48 hours in advance of your meeting. You will begin the semester with full credit for participation. The faculty member will only make deductions if you do not attend your individual meetings and do not send progress. You are required to attend the all-class sessions in-person per the course schedule.

## GRADING

Quick-fire challenge	(25 points)	}	<b>A:</b>	<b>310 – 330</b>
Ethical response paper	(30 points)		<b>A-:</b>	<b>297 – 309</b>
Communications Plan Outline	(70 points)		<b>B+:</b>	<b>290 – 296</b>
Final Plan	(150 points)		<b>B:</b>	<b>277 – 289</b>
Final Pitch	(40 points)		<b>B-:</b>	<b>264 – 276</b>
Class Participation	(15 points)		<b>C:</b>	<b>231 – 263</b>
<b>Total: 330 points</b>			<b>F:</b>	<b>230 and below</b>

## UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

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

- Library Resources for MPMC 900  
<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/researchcourseguides>  
<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/mpmc>
- 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://academicsupport.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://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability>) 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 professor will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.

## SCHEDULE

Class	Date	Topics to Discuss	Assignments Due
Wk 1	Wed, Aug. 31  NO CLASS Aug. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quick-fire Assignment</li></ul>	*Read <i>Principles of IMC</i> *Client approved <b>*Quick-fire assignment due</b>
Wk 2	Mon, Sept. 12	<b>REQUIRED IN-CLASS ATTENDANCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Introduction to Capstone and Faculty</li><li>Library Resources– Schedule Individual Meetings with Jessica, Librarian</li></ul>	*Review Week 2: Review slides on CANVAS

		<p><a href="http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/mpmc">http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/mpmc</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client Review</li> <li>• Discuss Outline Assignment and Grading Rubric</li> <li>• Discuss Ethics Assignment and Grading Rubric</li> <li>• Principles Q&amp;A Session</li> <li>• Consulting Workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>This is the final deadline for <u>late</u> client approval; if your client is not yet approved you are strongly encouraged to drop the course. Please be advised of that the 100% refund period ends within the first two weeks of class. Go to <a href="http://registrar.georgetown.edu/registration/refunds-and-tuition/">http://registrar.georgetown.edu/registration/refunds-and-tuition/</a> for details on the exact date.</b></p>	
Wk 3	Mon., Sept. 19	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topics: Business situation, Goals and Objectives
Wk 4	Mon, Sept 26	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	<b>*Ethics assignment due by 5:20 pm via CANVAS</b> Recommended Topic: Research/Insights
Wk 5	Mon., Oct 3	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topics: Audience Profile/Persona
Wk 6	Mon., Oct. 17	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topic: USP, Positioning Final Draft of Outline
Wk 7	Mon., Oct 24	<p><b>REQUIRED IN-CLASS ATTENDANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pitch Skills Presentation – Layla Masri, Bean Creative</li> <li>• Discuss Final Pitch and Grading Rubric</li> <li>• Career Planning Guest Lecture – Bailey O’Connell, Creative Circle</li> <li>• Creative Strategy and Development</li> </ul>	<b>*Outline assignment due by 5:20 pm via CANVAS</b>
Wk 8	Mon., Oct 31	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	Recommended Topic: Content Choice
Wk 9	Mon., Nov. 7	<b>REQUIRED ZOOM ATTENDANCE</b>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on Outlines</li> <li>• Discuss Final Plan Grading Rubric</li> <li>• Media Planning and Buying</li> </ul>	
Wk 10	Week of Mon., Nov. 14	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topic: Campaign and Media Calendar
Wk 11	Mon., Nov. 21	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topic: Budget through Evaluation
Wk 12	Week of Mon., Nov. 28	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topic: Final Plan
Wk 13	Mon., Dec. 5	<b>INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b>	*Recommended Topic: Final Plan and Pitch
Wk 14-15	Mon., Dec. 12	<p><b>REQUIRED IN-CLASS ATTENDANCE: FINAL PITCH</b></p> <p><b>Finale Celebration</b></p>	<p><b>*Final plan due by 5:00 pm via CANVAS AND one printed copy in the bin located at the security desk SCS entrance</b></p>