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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY: MPS-INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

**MPMC-706-01 BUILDING YOUR CREATIVE MUSCLE**

Thursdays, 5:20 to 7:50 p.m. | *Spring 2017*

Class Location: 640 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC 20001

Instructor: Joseph Ney

Office hours are by appointment.

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NOTE: STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ACTUALLY READ THIS SYLLABUS. YES, THE WHOLE THING. There is a fair amount of reading in this class—if you can't make it through the syllabus, it is safe to assume you will not enjoy the class.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Ever wonder how ideas are generated? Ever been intimidated by a blank page? These insights and more may be gleaned from, "Building Your Creative Muscle." Creativity is an essential but often overlooked or misunderstood resource. Every person has his or her own creative tendencies and capacity, but many marketing and communications professionals lack the necessary confidence, experience, techniques, and habits to effectively harness their innate creativity. This course will instill an appreciation of and framework for applying creativity in your daily work by examining the topic at length and in myriad formats. We'll identify the core concepts of creativity, examine and compare different techniques to generate it, and develop the discipline to turn down some ideas in favor of new and better ones. We will also explore how creativity is harnessed in different settings and careers.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course is a personal journey to discover strategies, tools, techniques, and attitudes to enhance creativity. We will explore a range of creative techniques and products, and you will learn to evaluate the characteristics of high impact creative thinking before formulating and pitching your own creative ideas. You will learn to increase your personal creativity, foster creativity in group environments, and supervise the creative development and implementation process in professional settings with varied timelines. By the end of this course, you can expect to:

- Understand some of the contributions of at least a dozen great creative thinkers,
- Use multiple techniques to stimulate and channel your own creativity,
- Evaluate the results of ideation sessions, and
- Appreciate the role and applicability of creativity in a wide variety of settings.

We also hope to foster your own creative confidence along the way and have a bit of fun as well.



## COURSE POLICIES

The success of this class depends on the active engagement of all students. Students are expected to turn off or ignore their communication devices while in class (this includes email, text, mobile, pagers—yes, really). Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions. Other information of importance for this class:

- We have much to cover, and your attention will be both required and appreciated. Unless you are expecting an emergency, wait until a break or the end of class to check email, text, or correspond on social media. Everyone in the class prefers that you be present, in the fullest sense of the word.
- Required readings and assignments are to be completed in advance of the class they are listed for. Be prepared to discuss the readings during each week's class. If you are unprepared for class or have not completed one of the readings, please let me know before class. You may be called upon to provide analysis at any time, and lack of preparation will negatively affect your participation scores.
- What happens in class stays in class unless you receive permission from those in class to share.

## ATTENDANCE

As outlined by the University, students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. If circumstances preclude attending a class or arriving on time, please notify me prior to the start of class (email preferred). You will still be responsible for classroom information—if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to catch up on content and make arrangements with your classmates to get class notes. Missing and/or being unprepared for more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be marked down to an A-). Further absences (or unpreparedness) 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.

## WORK SUBMITTED

- Work may be presented in the format students prefer. PowerPoint presentations have served well in the past, but other presentation formats or even Word documents are acceptable.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class for which they are assigned. Late work will be dropped one grade for each day it is late. If you have extenuating circumstances, correspond with me BEFORE the due date.
- Please email me your assignments in either PPT or PDF format before class AND ALSO bring a hard copy to class.

## REQUIRED READING

This course is about learning, appreciating, and adapting the skills, techniques, and contributions of others. Reference materials are hugely important to the accomplishment of our goals. The following resources are considered mandatory for class discussion, and while the volume is ample, your diligent review is expected in advance of each class discussion. This will be a discussion- and interaction-based class, not a lecture-based class, so our progress depends on your active participation, and the readings will help you participate. Plus, they are fun, so you really should do your reading. In case this is not clear and directive enough for everyone, please take note: *Failure to be prepared for class will result in a grade of zero for that class.*

Please obtain the following resources in advance of the class (BUY THEM NOW IF YOU CAN!) and read them in the order assigned (see class schedule). Note that many libraries carry these titles, and used or electronic versions of many of these books can be purchased through Amazon and other online vendors for less than the price listed:

- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, *Creativity, the psychology of discovery and invention*. Harper Collins, New York,

1996, ISBN 978-0-06-228325-2, \$13.53.

- Foster, Jack, *How to Get Ideas*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco, CA, 2007, ISBN 978-1-57675-430-6, \$15.26
- Godin, Seth, *Poke the Box*. Do You Zoom, Inc., 2011, ISBN 978-1-936719-00-6, \$15.59
- Goleman, Daniel, Kaufman, Paul, & Ray, Michael, *The Creative Spirit*. Penguin Group, New York, 1992, ISBN 0-525-93354-9, \$2.99
- Levitt, Theodore, *The Marketing Imagination*. The Free Press, New York, NY, 1986, ISBN 0-02-919180-7, \$17.96.
- Kelley, Tom & Kelley, David, *Creative Confidence*. Crown Business, 2013, ISBN 978-0-385-34936-9, \$11.64
- Kleon, Austin, *Steal Like an Artist*. Workman Publishing Company, New York, 2012, ISBN 978-0-7611-6925-3, \$8.35
- Larson, Gary, *The Far Side Gallery*. Andrews McMeel & Parker, 1984, ISBN 0836220625, \$13.50
- Michalko, Michael, *Thinkertoys*. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, CA, 2006 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), ISBN 978-1-58008-773-5, \$14.38
- Sark, *A Creative Companion*. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, CA, 2004 (any edition), ISBN 978-0890876510, \$3.96
- Seuss, Dr., *Oh the Thinks You Can Think!* Random House, 1975, ISBN 0394831292, \$4.49
- Sullivan, Luke & Boches, Edward, *Hey Whipple Squeeze This: The Classic Guide to Creating Great Ads*, Wiley, 2016, ISBN 978-1-119-16400-5, \$13.76.
- Young, James Webb, *A Technique for Producing Ideas*. Waking Lion Press, West Valley City, UT, 1940, ISBN 978-1-4341-0275-1, \$3.43. (Note: This book is public domain material and available through multiple publishers—any version will suffice).

#### LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR MPMC

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

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



## ASSIGNMENTS

This class requires significant personal investment, with a relatively large body of required reference material. Assignments are designed to add to your learning (in each class) and reflect your progress at key points along the way. Here is a summary of assignments and their contribution to your overall grade:

### *I. Class Participation (60 points)*

Students are expected to complete the weekly readings and participate in our weekly discussions. This is not a lecture class, but one that relies on your active participation. Each class, every student will receive a grade from 0 to 3 reflecting the value of his/her comments and remarks. If a student is absent or unprepared, his/her grade for that class will be a zero. The ten highest grades will be kept, allowing up to 30 points for this portion of a student's class participation grade. In addition, each student will be cold-called at least once during the class (note that it is possible to be cold-called more than once). The cold call will cover the week's assigned reading (though students may also be asked to tie it to earlier learnings), and students will be expected to offer their personal thoughts on how the readings advanced their understanding of creativity. Up to 30 points can be earned for cold call responses, yielding a maximum class participation score of 60.

### *II. Creative Profile (40 points)*

Each student will be asked to prepare and present a profile of a creative visionary. While essential information of the type found on Wikipedia can help inform the class, it is the personal examination and, if applicable, inspiration of each visionary that will determine a successful Profile.

### *III. Creative Assignment #1: Identity (60 points)*

Each team member will be given a creative brief and asked to develop identity concepts.

### *IV. Creative Assignment #2: Commercial/PSA (100 points)*

Students will work in teams to create a commercial or PSA concept to address a particular marketing challenge. Students will develop creative solutions, refine them, and present a robust concept that accomplishes the objectives assigned.

### *V. Creative Reflection: (40 points)*

Each student will be asked to look back on his/her goals and learning over the course of the class and present a summary of his/her thoughts and learning.



**GRADING**

Your grade will reflect your participation and personal investment in this class, both in the form of written deliverables and in contributions to class discussions and learning. The table at right illustrates the numeric score needed to achieve each grade possible. Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F. (There are no grades of A+, C+, C- or D). I will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor (C or below) final grade.

Score	Grade
280 - 300	A
270 - 279	A-
264 - 269	B+
249 - 263	B
240 - 248	B-
210 - 239	C
< 210	F

*Note to students: Recognizing that grades are of substantial interest to you during your scholastic endeavors, I will confess in advance that my evaluation of your work may differ substantially from your own evaluations, and you may not find my grading fair. Accordingly, if you are unsatisfied with your grades on any individual assignment or the class overall, you are welcome to discuss your grades with me (after class or by email, please) and/or ask for a re-evaluation of your work. When re-evaluating work, however, I will reserve the right to mark scores either up OR down.*

*Also of note, grammar, spelling, and proper citations matter. Your written products will receive two sets of grades and comments. The first will reflect my view of your demonstrated learning in the class—this is the grade that will feature most prominently in your course grade. The second grade and set of comments will reflect the quality and professionalism of your product—effectively how it would be perceived in the world outside the classroom. These comments and grades will not feature prominently in your overall grade; in borderline cases, however, they may make the difference between a letter grade and the next level up or down.*

*Finally, please recognize that grades are only an approximation of your learning in this class, a limited approximation filtered through my perception of your learning and my evaluation of your contributions during our class. No grade in the world is worth real and substantive learning that lasts, and of course those are the larger goals of this course. Please bear that in mind on our journey.*

**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 instructors will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.



**COURSE SCHEDULE**

*Note: The following plan may change to accommodate the instructor's schedule or that of guest speakers, school closures, or discussion of emerging topics. Every effort will be made to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.*

JANUARY	
Class 1: Jan. 12	<p><b>What This Course Is All About</b></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> We will review the syllabus and discuss our collective understanding of and experience with creativity, myths and misperceptions, and identify well known and lesser-known creative figures throughout history. We will also take time to share our individual backgrounds, interests, and goals/expectations for this course. And we will begin our exploration of the universe of creativity by introducing creative profiles and considering the creative work and methodology of a prolific creative mind.</p>
Class 2: Jan. 19	<p><b>The Creative Process</b></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> We'll begin to examine the core concepts of creativity, learn techniques to promote it, and develop the discipline to turn down some ideas in favor of new and better ones. We will also have an in-class creative exercise.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>            Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u>            NOTE—It is recommended that reading start with Young, then proceed to Foster, Kelley/Kelley and Seuss.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young (all)</li> <li>• Foster (pages ix – 18, 131 – 183)</li> <li>• Kelley/Kelley (preface &amp; introduction)</li> <li>• Sullivan (chapters 1 &amp; 2)</li> </ul>
Class 3: Jan. 26	<p><b>Harnessing Creativity: The Creative Brief</b></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> How is creativity channeled in a communications agency setting? We will look at several examples of creative briefs, including the results they generate.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>            Creative Profile(s) due for select students            Creative Assignment 1 assigned</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster (pages 20 – 46; 67 – 81)</li> <li>• Csikszentmihalyi (chapter 2)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goleman, Kaufman, &amp; Ray (chapter 1)</li> <li>• Sullivan (p.20, chapters 3 &amp; 6)</li> <li>• Sample creative briefs to be distributed via email.</li> </ul>
F E B R U A R Y	
Class 4: Feb. 2	<p><b>Brainstorming</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> What is “brainstorming” really? How and why can we use this technique? How can a brainstorm be right or wrong? What rules can guide us? How do we generate the volume of ideas necessary to get a really good one? These are the questions we’ll examine through study of brainstorming and a few different processes to lead them.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Profile(s) due for select students          Creative Brief for Assignment 1 due</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster (pages 94 – 99; 102 – 115)</li> <li>• Michalko (preface – 39)</li> <li>• Sullivan (chapter 4)</li> </ul>
Class 5: Feb. 9	<p><b>Creativity in Writing</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We’ll examine the work of some of history’s most creative writers and thinkers, finding what motivated them, how they harnessed their muses, and differences in technique or philosophy.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Csikszentmihalyi (chapter 10)</li> <li>• Foster (pages 118 – 123)</li> <li>• Kleon (all)</li> <li>• Sullivan (chapters 5 &amp; 8)</li> </ul>
Class 6: Feb. 16	<p><b>Creativity in Video</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We will look at a variety of creative works in the video medium and discuss how they work and how effective they are.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Assignment 1 due          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sullivan (chapter 16)</li> </ul>
<p>Class 7: Feb. 23</p>	<p><b>Creative Careers</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> What is a “creative” career? How do worktype personalities figure in? How can creativity be incorporated into different career tracks? We’ll examine a few types of creative careers and discuss the possibilities.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Csikszentmihalyi (chapter 11)</li> <li>Goleman, Kaufman, &amp; Ray (chapter 3)</li> <li>Levitt (pages 72 – 111, 127 – 140)</li> <li>Sullivan (chapters 9 &amp; 21)</li> </ul>
MARCH	
<p>Class 8: Mar. 2</p>	<p><b>Field Trip/Guest Speaker</b>          We will hit the field and be inspired by the works of others. We will also explore the concept and application of creativity in group settings.</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kelley/Kelley (chapter 6)</li> <li>Sullivan (chapter 18)</li> </ul>
<p>Class 9: Mar. 16  (No class Mar. 9)</p>	<p><b>IdeaLab</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We’ll explore multiple creative exercises in class to learn new techniques and evaluate what works best for whom and in what circumstances. Students will have a chance to participate with different team members and then evaluate the product and the team’s performance.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Assignment 2 assigned          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please choose a thinkertoy at random from Michalko and complete it. Write down your results and conclusions and bring them to class for discussion.</li> </ul>
<p>Class 10: Mar. 23</p>	<p><b>Creativity in Art &amp; Design</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We’ll examine the work of some of history’s most creative artists and designers, finding what motivated them, how they harnessed their muses, and differences in technique or philosophy.</p>



	<p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sark (all)</li> <li>• Larson (Please turn to a random page. Continue reading until you are inspired by the creativity of a cartoon. Analyze it and be prepared to discuss it in class).</li> </ul>
<p>Class 11:          Mar. 30</p> <p>(No class          Apr. 2)</p>	<p><b>Creativity in Music</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We'll examine the work of some of history's most creative musicians and songwriters, finding what motivated them, how they harnessed their muses, and differences in technique or philosophy.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Please bring a list of your five favorite musical contributors (bands, composers, performers, recording artists—whatever you like), along with a brief description of what makes them special for you          Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster (pages 124 – 127)</li> <li>• Sullivan (chapter 7)</li> </ul>
<p>APRIL</p>	
<p>Class 12:          Apr. 6</p> <p>(No class          Apr. 13)</p>	<p><b>Campaign Concept Review</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> Students will present Creative Assignment 2 in teams. We will review the concepts and discuss how each was produced.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Assignment 2 due</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster (pages 83 – 90)</li> <li>• Sullivan (chapter 8)</li> </ul>
<p>Class 13:          Apr. 20</p>	<p><b>Creativity in the Digital Age</b>  <u>Discussion:</u> We will examine the endless possibilities of creativity in the digital age. We will also review our journey to date, discussing what we have learned of interest, how it can be used, re-examine our goals, and preview the final assignment, the Creative Reflection.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u>          Creative Reflection assigned</p>



	<p>Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Godin (all)</li><li>• Sullivan (chapters 11 – 15)</li></ul>
<p>Class 14: Apr. 27</p>	<p><b>Creative Confidence</b></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> We'll look at what really contributes to creative confidence.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u> Creative Profile(s) due for select students</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kelley/Kelley (chapters 1-5, 7). Please choose one of the ten exercises and complete it. Write down your results and conclusions and bring them to class prepared for discussion.</li></ul>
<p>M A Y</p>	
<p>Class 15: May 11  (No class May 4)</p>	<p><b>Reflections</b></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Each student will present his/her creative reflection, looking back on his/her goals and learning over the course of the class. As a group, we will discuss what worked and what didn't, and if/when any light bulbs came on.</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u> Creative Reflection due</p> <p><u>Readings to prepare for this class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kelley/Kelley (chapter 8)</li><li>• Seuss (all)</li></ul>



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
*Public Relations and Corporate Communications*

SYLLABUS: BUILDING YOUR CREATIVE MUSCLE

STUDENT PLEDGE. I pledge to be an active participant and adhere to spirit and the standards of the University and this class, as outlined on in this syllabus and including the Honor Code pledge, and my signature below signifies my commitment for each class and assignment.

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(Name)

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(Signature)

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(Date)