

Communication 3950: Conferences and Event Planning (Section 001 / 3 Credit Hours)  
Fall 2016. Room: Coleman Hall 2120  
MW 8:30-10:35 a.m.

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**Instructor:** Scott Walus      **Office:** 1810 Coleman Hall  
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**Required Materials:**

There is no text book to purchase, however, as this is an applied class, you are required to bring the following:

- A USB drive / external hard drive to obtain all of the course readings for the semester. This will also be used for all storage of your projects throughout the semester.
  - A paper notebook and writing utensil.
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**Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic concepts and principles of conferences and event planning management. It is an applied course designed to introduce students to the planning process, sponsorships, promotion, and creative strategies that are part of events.

**Course Objectives**

- Develop a theoretical understanding about events in general and develop an applied skill set through developing and managing a music-driven philanthropy.
- Learn the essentials of executing brand throughout each stage of an event.
- Create and refine both written and visual communication around an event.
- Learn to work in a team effectively as well as with external talent.

**Professionalism:**

The term “professionalism” is often used as a buzzword, but it is rather important as a communication scholar. While you are going to have to spend a fair amount of time outside class working on your projects, this should not be viewed as a substitute for attending class. In addition to receiving information vital to understanding this complex production process, you will constantly be working on applied projects. Additionally, all assignments are explained in class and all feedback on projects provided orally. There is no make up.

**Attendance/Participation**

While there is no attendance policy in the course, each meeting requires you to gather information before class. I expect you to bring to class what is requested (listed beneath each day as “bring”). These go toward the 6 of 22 points of the semester. You can only get these points by being in class and bringing what is specifically requested. There is absolutely no opportunity to make these up.

**Criteria for Evaluation**

The Event	5
Event Reports & Critiques	2
Event Proposal	2

Visual Promotions	2
Promotional Copy	2
Brand Analysis	1
Event Manual	2
“Brings”	6

Each day, I expect you to bring to class what I have listed (we refer to it as a “bring”) in hard copy form. If it is not printed, it will not count. These “brings” are essential for understanding concepts as well as informing your own projects. “Brings” can only be presented on the days that they are due and there are absolutely no make ups. Mathematically, seven “brings” equal one point.

Total points: 22

### General Grading Guidelines

Projects in the professional world do not receive partial credit. They are either of professional quality or not. However, projects of a professional quality seldom happen on a first draft. They nearly always require revisions that ultimately improve the project. The assessments in this class will mirror the professional world of event planning and management.

- All assignments are assigned orally. (There is always substantial time for clarification in class.)
- You must have your project in class during the class that it is due or else you cannot make revisions, and therefore receive a zero.
- There is only the score of full points or zero. The score of full points will be awarded to technically proficient projects that communicate brand well, as well as meeting all other criteria assigned.
- All feedback on the project will be received orally in class and must be incorporated in order to receive the full points. (Take notes during the feedback).
- If you get a zero, you have until your event to redo the project and present it publicly in class. Any assignments not directly related to the event are due at the beginning of Week 14. If it meets the quality required, you receive full credit. You may re-present as many times as necessary and you may re-present the project at the beginning of any class period. Additionally, just because you make revisions, does not guarantee points. The project has to be right. This can take one draft or four.
- I am on your team and will do everything I can to help you get the project to this level of quality. We serve the product, not our egos!

There are several advantages to this grading process. First, it mirrors a professional environment, where your work is not complete until it is ready for the public. Secondly, it rewards good work with full credit. Third, it allows for revision, which is an invaluable skill and will motivate you to do quality work as you must stand by your work. The drafting process is an invaluable one. Unlike other classes “just getting it done” does not get you points; it must be right.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

**100-90% = A            89-80% = B            79-70% = C            69-60% = D            59- 0% = F**

### Academic integrity:

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to

the Office of Student Standards. You are expected to write your own papers and generate your own answers on quizzes and exams. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Consequences of academic dishonesty range from failing of the course to expulsion from the university.

### **Students with disabilities:**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

### **The Student Success Center:**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

### **Student Standards:**

All faculty in the Department of Communication Studies are expected to uphold the standards of good scholarship and we expect our students to do the same. Students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing and presentational skills while also building comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in Communication Studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively, complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards.

### **Tentative Course Schedule**

**(Note: I reserve the right to adapt this schedule as the semester progresses)**

### **Conceptualizing Events**

Week 1 (Aug 22)

8/22 – Introduction to course

8/24 - Introducing events and brands

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 1 - Introduction to Event Management”

Bring: Three examples of events related your area of interest (All necessary descriptions, branding, images, etc.)

Week 2 (Aug 29)

8/29 - Conceptualizing an event / promotional event

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 2 - Concept and Design”

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 3 - Feasibility”

Bring: A new example of an event you would like to emulate. Make a half page of notes on what it would take to transfer it to the EIU/Charleston area.

Bring: A list of three organizations from the area with which you would like to work this semester.

Assign: Brand Analysis

9/2 - Commodity sign / Semiotics / Stakeholders and events

Bring: All of the visual branding for the organization that you chose previously.

Bring: All of the visual branding for an event you would like to emulate (this includes photos of the event and all digital/physical visual promotional material)

Bring: A list of the stakeholders involved in the organization from the area you selected previously.

Assign: Event Report & Critique #1

Week 3

9/5 – No class held (University holiday)

9/7 – Event concepts and event proposals

Dunks - “Interactivity at Film Festivals” (one page)

Allen Business - “Strategic Planning of Event Design”

Allen Business - “Ch. 2 – Preparing the Proposal”

Bring: An event of a classic activity that has been updated in a provocative manner. List out five manners by which it has been updated.

Bring: Three tangible benefits that an organization would gain by having you run an event for them.

Bring: A half page of notes on a music-driven benefit you could hold in Charleston.

Assign: Event Proposal

Week 4

9/12 - Strategic planning, brand work, and event logistics

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 9 – Planning and Mission Statement”

Dean - “Associating the corporation with a charitable event”

Bring: An example of intriguing corporate philanthropy that benefits brand.

Due: Brand analysis

## **Planning Logistics**

9/14 – Location and audience analysis

Allen EP - “Ch. 3 – Location, Location, Location”

Bring: On three separate pages, three locations in the Charleston/EIU area where you could host your event. For each list: the brand essence of the venue, five advantages, five disadvantages, and the three demographic groups it is most likely to draw.

Bring: Three target publics that your event will target.

Due: Event Report & Critique #1

Week 5

9/19 - Branded events and Entertainment relations

Allen Business - “Ch. 10 – Event and Program Branding”

Allen EP - “Ch. 9 - Entertainment”

Bring: An example of a music-driven philanthropy with an excellent brand. Bring all necessary copy and visuals.

Bring: A list of music-driven activities for an event. Describe its brand capital and list out five advantages, five disadvantages, and the three demographic groups it is most likely to draw.

9/21 – Finances and sponsorship

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 7 - Finances”

Bring: Three examples of mutually beneficial sponsorship of an event.

Bring: A list of ten area businesses/organizations that would benefit from sponsoring your event.

Bring: An initial list of event costs.

Due: Event Proposal

## **Promotion and Event Branding**

Week 6

9/26 – Promo and marketing

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 5 - Marketing”

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 6 – Promotion”

Bring: The entire set of promotional material (press releases, social media, visuals, ads, copy, etc.) for a single event. This should be an event that you believe is exceptionally executed.

Assign: Promotional Copy

9/28 – Long form copy

Bring: An informational press release in the “inverted pyramid” style from an event similar to yours that was well done.

Bring: A feature-style press release from an event similar to yours.

Bring: Bullet points of the story of your event as well as two quotes from individuals who are involved.

Week 7

10/3 – New media copy & publicity

Daugherty - “Strategic planning in public relations”

Bring: Three examples of exceptionally well-done event calendar copy about an event similar to your own and three examples of Facebook event copy from similar events.

Bring: Five types of social media posts leading up to an event similar to your own. These can be similar or different platforms.

Bring: A comprehensive media list for the Charleston area.

Assign: Visual Promotions

10/5 - Visual communication (print)

Bring: Complete visual promotions for two events similar to your own that are exceptionally done. This should include posters, handbills, print ads, and any other physical media.

Bring: Thumbnail sketches for visual promotions.

Bring: A computer with desktop publishing / design software on it.

Due: Promotional Copy

Week 8

10/10 – Visual communication (digital)

Bring: Complete visual promotions for two events similar to your own that are exceptionally done. This should include social media banners, photos, digital ads, companion web sites, and any other digital media.

Bring: Thumbnail sketches for visual promotions.

Bring: A computer with desktop publishing / design software on it.

10/12 – Advances and production schedules

Bring: List of individuals involved in the event and bullet points of information that each individual needs.

Bring: Timeline of your event, from load in to load out.

Due: Visual Promotions

Week 9

10/17 – Event visuals & copy

Bring: Thumbnails of event day visuals and rough draft of event day copy.

10/19 – Event staging and logistics

Van Der Wagen & Carlos - “Ch. 11 - Staging”

Allen EP - “Ch. 6 - “Event Requirements”

Bring: An itemized checklist of all the items needed for the event.

Bring: Pictures of the room where your event will occur and a sketch of the “before event” and “during event” floor plans.

Week 10

10/24 – Implementing promotions

Bring: Regulations on chalking, handbills, and posting items on campus.

Bring: A comprehensive list of businesses and organizations in Charleston where you can hang posters and a list of everywhere on campus you can hang posters.

10/26 – Event photography / Documenting your event

Bring: Digital camera of reasonable quality.

Bring: Yourself dressed in the attire you will wear at your event.

Assign: Event Report & Critique #2

Week 11 (11/7-9) / Week 12 (11/14-16) / Week 13 (11/21-23)

All events will be held during one of these three weeks

Classes are still held as scheduled. These are in-class workdays. You cannot hold your event until all copy, visual design, and proposals have been given full points. If the event is not held by Wednesday of Week 13, you will receive a zero.

Thanksgiving break (Nov. 21-25)

Week 14

11/28 Post-event activities

Bring: All photos from event.

Bring: A list of individuals you need to thank.

Bring: A great example of a high-quality wrap-up of an event. Take examples from social media, both copy and visuals.

Assign: Event Manual

Due: Event Report & Critique #2

11/30

Due: All outstanding revisions

Week 15

12/5 – Image repair

Lauzen - “Image Repair at Cannes”

Bring: Find multiple news stories (at least three) on Lexis Nexis about a company that had image/reputation troubles arise out of their event. One of the stories should document the issue and one of them should demonstrate their attempts at image repair.

12/7 – Meetings about event manual

Bring: Quality draft of your event manual with all specified sections.

Week 16

Thursday, Dec. 15, 8-10 a.m. (as scheduled by university)

Due: Final draft of event manual