

Communication 3500: New Media Practices (Section 001 / 3 credit hours)
Spring 2018. Room: Coleman Hall 1781
MW 11-12:40 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Scott Walus
Email: smwalus@eiu.edu

Office: 1810 Coleman Hall
Office Hours: M 7-8 p.m.; T 6-7 p.m.;
W 10-11 a.m., 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Required Texts and Materials:

There is no text book to purchase, however, there will be several extremely applicable foundational readings provided to you at the beginning of the semester via a flashdrive, which you will bring to class in the first week. Additionally, bring a notebook and pen as well for in-class writing and storyboarding. You will also need to buy/accrue the following:

- Sign up for a Youtube, Vimeo or other online video hosting site.
- Sign up for WordPress Account
- **A computer with Adobe CS or CC.** Having a computer with this program suite will make your life exponentially easier. It will allow you to both construct and revise projects at home and ensure that your files will be where you left them (instead of losing media). If you absolutely cannot acquire any version of Adobe, Coleman and some other buildings on campus have the required software in various, often non-compatible versions. However, you are required to purchase an external harddrive formatted for Mac if you choose this option (Multiple students use these computers and the files on these units are routinely wiped in order to save space) and the performance of these computers is not guaranteed nor is it an excuse to not satisfactorily complete a project. You will spend a significant amount of time in Premiere and Audition and media is your career, get Adobe CC.
- A camera that can shoot good quality video. A DSLR, flipcam, or smartphone in good functioning shape with the resolution and audio bit rate set properly will work.

Course Description

From the EIU catalog: "This workshop-based course introduces students to cross-platform digital production with an emphasis in branding, framing, narrative, and deploying symbols across various new media. This course melds social media and public relations with audio/visual production skills in order to communicate a unified message across various media in a constantly changing new media environment."

Specifically, we will integrate writing, storytelling, branding, audio production, digital photography, and basic video production in a pragmatic form of convergence. This class exists in a professional environment where attention to detail is paramount and it relies on quite a bit of external planning, discussion, and work on the part of each student. Throughout this semester, you will be working with your choice of organization (on or off-campus), cause, locally owned and operated business, artist, musician, band, or anything else that you choose and that I approve. It should be something that you have frequent access to (look to what you are already involved in as well) and must be able to visit in-person frequently throughout the semester. You should secure permission and begin working with this group as soon as possible. This course will yield an impressive portfolio of applied experience with an actual organization.

Course Objectives

- Integrate communication theory into multimedia and cross platform production skills.
- Apply the knowledge and basic language of audio and digital video aesthetics and composition.
- Implement basic layout and design skills.

- Utilize the essentials of field production, project conceptualization, composition, sound, lighting, and nonlinear editing.
- Conduct interviews across multiple mediated platforms.
- Integrate branding into each stage of the process with a focus on narratives.
- Develop insight into theoretical questions facing contemporary producers of visual culture in a changing media ecosystem.
- Critique and evaluate peer projects based on contemporary new media.

Hardware & Software

Digital camera / Digital audio recorder / WordPress account / Adobe Premiere & Audition

Criteria for evaluation (note: All assignments must be embedded on Wordpress site)

Brand Comparison Report	1	
Self-branding video	1	
Brand narrative structures	1	
Photo slideshow of brand narrative	2	
Podcast pilot / audio interview	2	
30-60 second promotional video	2	
Webisode 1	3	
Continuing content / demo reel	5	
New Media Musings	2	
Brings	3	22 points total

General Grading Guidelines:

Media production in the professional world does not give partial credit nor does it allow for poor work to go live and represent the brand. They are either of the best quality possible or not. However, polished, quality projects seldom happen on a first draft. They nearly always require revisions that ultimately improve the project. Therefore, the assessment in this class will mirror the professional world of promotional media. For each assignment, there are a set of rules.

- All assignments are assigned orally. There is always substantial time for clarification.
- You must have your project in class during the class that it is due or else you receive a zero and cannot do the revisions. You are given a five minute window in the beginning of class, but after that it is considered late and not accepted. Additionally, it must be in the form of a reasonable draft of the assignment (ex: an actual rough cut, not just a single shot that you air to our confusion). I require this so I can provide substantive feedback.
- 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 (ex: time length, narrative).
- All feedback on the project will be received orally and publicly.
- If you get a zero, you have until the last class meeting of week 14 to redo the project and air it publicly in class. If it meets the quality required, you receive full credit. The exception is with the two written assignments (brand comparison and brand narrative structures). You will have one week to make the revisions on these assignments once I return them with notes.
- I am on your team and will do everything I can to help you get the project to a polished level of quality. We serve the product, not our ego!

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.

New media musings: Each “New Media Musing” allows you to reflect upon the concepts discussed in class and find applicable examples in the world of promotional media. While they must be typed, they are musings, and thus your initial thoughts on a subject. Each New Media Musing requires the following: 1. A few sentences answering the question posed. 2. An actual specific example of the concept/topic from the musing. Explain the example and how it is an example of the concept. 3. A concept that you would like to discuss from the readings / something you read during your writing of the musing. These are worth 2 points of the class and there are 15 musings in total, thus 7 musings = 1 point. These do not have the opportunity for revision so take the time and make them quality.

Brings: Each “Bring” is an item/set of items you must bring to class that period in order to fully participate in the discussion and understand the concepts. In order to get full credit, you must be present with the “bring” for the entire duration of the class period (there are no exceptions) and no more than five minutes late to the class. These are worth 3 points of the class and there are 28 “brings” in the class, thus 9 brings = 1 point and one can be missed without penalty.

There are several advantages to this grading process. First, it mirrors a professional environment, where your work is not complete until it is broadcast ready or can go “live.” Secondly, it rewards good work with full credit. Remember, you start this (and every course) with zero points, and you must earn your way up Point Mountain. 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. 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

Attendance, late work, and two extension coupons:

While there is no formal attendance policy in the course, this class is practically impossible to pass without constant attendance. Additionally, you are required to be present on-time and for the duration of a class where is an assignment is due or it will not be accepted (this includes “brings”). Let me reiterate, no late work is accepted in this course as it only leads to future problems. That being said, life does happen sometimes. With this in mind, this syllabus includes two extension coupons that can be used on any assignment for any reason without any explanation needed. This coupon allows you an extension on any assignment (bring or project) until the next class period, and you still receive full points if you accomplish the assignment satisfactorily. Here is how to use the coupon:

1. You may only use two coupons per semester. This system is meant to be flexible and to simplify life for both of us in the event that you miss class or cannot complete an assignment on time. By using these coupons, you will not ask me to accept any other late work this semester regardless of your circumstance. If you ask me to accept late work after using your coupons, the previous coupons will be considered null and void and you will receive zeros on those projects.
2. These coupons can be used at any point in the semester through week 14. This means that coupons cannot be used in the final two weeks of the semester.
3. Write your name on it and staple or paper clip it to your assignment. Folded over does not count and will not be accepted.
4. If you miss a “bring,” you must talk to a classmate about the topic of the day and provide a 2-3 sentence summary of the discussion with the original “bring.”

Cell Phones & Digital Devices:

Absolutely no cell phone / tablet / laptop / digital device usage is allowed in this class. Unless directly directed to use the device for in-class research or if you inform the professor about an urgent situation where someone will be contacting you, device usage is absolutely banned. This classroom is a space for complex thought and conversation. In order to have complex thought and conversation, you need to be present without disruption. This policy is supported by unequivocal data on the negative correlation between screens in the classroom and learning.

1. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study demonstrated that it is impossible for the brain to multi-tasking and any attempt to do so “ruins productivity, causes mistakes, and impedes creative thought.” Disrupting a thought process by checking digital content is not good for learning or the generation of new ideas.
2. Multiple empirical studies have demonstrated that screens in the classroom diminish learning. A Princeton study demonstrated how taking notes on a laptop lowered comprehension of material and retention. Studies by Kaspersky found that the mere presence of a smart phone on a desk lowered test scores by 23%, causes “digital amnesia,” and makes employees 26% overall less productive at work.
3. Checking your phone also makes class time emotionally less enjoyable. The National Institute of Health found that a rise in anxiety and stress is directly related to problematic cell phone usage. If you believe you will have a difficult time abstaining from digital devices, you are not alone. A Baylor University study found that 60% of college students felt mentally and physically addicted to their cell phones.

In order to encourage a singular focus, I will not accept whatever assignment is due that day from you and you will receive a zero on it if you look at your digital device during class. This is any glance at a cell phone, tablet, or lap top. Notes should be taken by hand (and then transcribed later if you wish). There are no warnings. If you continue to look at the device, you will lose a previous “bring” point for each infraction. To add some spice to the equation, if I miss the infraction, and your classmate informs on you, he/she gets the “bring” point taken from you.

I run a classroom that places a premium on showing up and engaging with a topic. Under this system, conversations are more intriguing, students report a deeper understanding of material, and every class period goes by faster. “Be here now,” as there is no advantage to thinking about somewhere else that you are not.

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) 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

<u>Week 1</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
M	Course Introduction	
W	Branding	Read: Schley and Nichols - "Branding" Schrubbe-Potts - "Branding Examples 1" Schrubbe-Potts - "Branding Examples 2"

New Media Musing #1: What is branding and how does it work? What human need does it satiate?

Bring: Print out and bring 3 examples of intriguing brands. You will include: 1. A for-profit company. 2. A non-profit group. 3. An individual. to which you have loyalty. For each you should bring at least two images and an official description of the brand from the organization's website (at minimum two sentences). You will do this for each brand.

<u>Week 2</u>		
M	MLK Jr. Day (No classes held at university)	
W	Branding continued Commodity Sign Construction	Assign Brand Comparison in Print Read: Goldman & Papson "Introduction: Advertising in the age of accelerated meaning" Goldman & Papson "Sign Wars"

New Media Musing #2: What is a commodity sign? What causes its value to rise? Fall?

Bring:

1. You will have your client selected by today along with formal permission. Please bring some type of permission (either an e-mail with a conversation demonstrating the specifics of the projects or a signed sheet of paper with the same) to demonstrate their willingness to participate in all of the projects for the entire semester.
2. You should bring examples of three similar brands to your organization to class. These should again include at least two images and a description of each organization from the website/other official outlet.

<u>Week 3</u>		
M	Semiotics	Fiske "Signification"

New Media Musing #3: How do semiotics help us understand media messages? Why are sign systems important to brand development/management?

Bring: For the three brands from the previous class, bring: screenshots from their most viewed YouTube video, a screenshot of their homepage, and a screenshot of a highly interactive social media post.

W	Blog Creation & Project Management	Read: Holtz & Demopoulous "Business blogging" Weil "Corporate blogging"
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New Media Musing #4: In 2018, what is the function of a blog for an organization? What should it be?

Bring: Print out and bring two examples of blogs (bring 2-3 entries for each, you do not need the comment section) for organizations that you feel are engaging.

Week 4

M

Topic

Convergence: Microblogging, vlogs, podcasting, social networking.

Assignment Due

Assign Self-branding Video

Brand Comparison Due

New Media Musing #5: What does convergence entail? How does a campaign remain on-brand across different media platforms in a cross platform campaign?

Bring: For a promotional campaign that you find particularly strong, find all platforms where on-brand content appeared. Take screen grabs of all of it (ex: each video, web site, in-content ads, print, Instagram, etc.) and compile it into a single document. At the bottom, include the dominant signified of this campaign and five recurring signifiers.

W

Social networking and brand
Parasocial Interactions 2.0

Read:

Nevins & Torres - "Social Media Strategies and Irish Night Clubs"

New Media Musing #6: What is the relationship between audiences and a brand? How do Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube each cultivate this relationship differently?

Bring: 1. Print out and bring one example of a Twitter account related to an organization that is somehow similar to your own that you feel is effective. Print out multiple posts (3-5).

2. Print out and bring an example of a Facebook page of an organization similar to your own that you feel is effective. Print out multiple posts (3-5).

3. Print out and bring an example of an Instagram page of an organization similar to your own that you feel is effective. Print out multiple posts (3-5).

Week 5

M

Mediated narrative

Read: Hefland - "New media, new narrative"

Schley & Nichols - "Brand Story"

Assign Brand Narrative Structures

New Media Musing #7: Why is storytelling in media more important than ever? What are the most important elements of an effective narrative?

Bring: 1. An example of an organization telling the same story in text and in video. Make notes on how the video communicated the message in a manner that words could not?

2. Print out and bring two examples of a brand narrative of an organization similar to your own. This story details the origins of an organization and is typically 1-3 pages. They are widely available online. Find provocative examples that go beyond mere chronology.

W

Photographs and signification
Photography social media

Assign Photo Slideshow Brand Narrative

Self Brand Video Introduction Due

New Media Musing #8: How do organizations similar to your own effectively use photography to articulate brand? What specific signifying practices are their photos using?

Bring: 1. Print out and bring 6 photographs that successfully brand an organization similar to your own. At least 3 must be photographs of people.

2. Find two popular Instagram accounts of an organization similar in some way to your own. Come prepared with an elevator pitch about how your organization could effectively use Instagram based on the precedents of these other two organizations.

Week 6

M Photography and composition

In-class work on image composition
Narrative and exposition
LinkedIn and personal brand
Brand Narrative Structures

Bring: 1. Come dressed professionally as we will take professional pictures.
2. A camera or a smart phone with good imaging.
3. Three props for staging in these photos that will best promote your personal brand.

W Adobe Premiere Workshop

In-class work on photo slideshow

Bring: 1. The photographs for your slideshow on your computer's hard drive / external hard drive (note: it absolutely must be transferred off the device on which you took them).
2. Computer with Adobe Premiere installed or external hard-drive formatted for Mac.
3. A copyright-free music file on external hard-drive (must be creative commons or your own scoring)

Week 7

Topic

Assignment Due

M New media design / matching aesthetic

Photo Slideshow of Brand Narrative Due

New Media Musing #9: What is an aesthetic? Describe the signifiers of the aesthetic of your brand (visuals, font, artwork, color choice, layout choices, sounds, velocity of editing, etc.) and what they communicate.

Bring: 1. Specific examples of the fonts, artwork, color schemes, layout choices, music, similar media genres, and photos that represent your genre. Bring them both in print and on a hard-drive.
2. Three examples of home pages / social media artwork in a similar aesthetic to the brand that you wish to construct.

W Audio and podcasting
In class interviewing for audio

Assign Podcast / Audio Interview

Bring: Print out and bring the main page for a podcast that you find interesting for an organization related to your own. They should be something episodic and about the organization. Also, print out descriptions of five episodes. These can be from a video hosting site as well.

Bring: 1. A device that can capture audio. Portable flash recorders or smartphones/tablets/laptops with a dedicated capturing program and microphone will work (as long as you go into your settings to put them on maximum quality). We will be editing down an audio interview to be seamless.
2. A list of the best three applications for capturing sound on a smartphone (with one sentence description).

Week 8

Topic

Assignment Due

M In-class audio capture and edit exercise

New Media Musing #10: How does audio change the manner by which a media producer tells a story? What elements in the story are emphasized and what audio symbols are available?

W Audio mastering
Search Engine Optimization
In-class audio workshop in Audition.

<u>Week 9</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
M	Video composition	Podcast / Audio Interview Due Assign 30-60 Second Promotional Video

Bring: 1. Screenshots of the three best, on-brand video interviews that you can find. Underneath each, list out five signifiers that make it visually communicate so effectively.
2. A camera that can capture video with the settings on maximum quality with the application you have chosen installed.

<u>Week 11</u>		
M	Narrative and character in video	Assign Webisode Serial

New Media Musing #13: What is branded entertainment and why will it continue to gain relevance in the next few years? What types of genres from TV/film do you see in branded entertainment?

Bring: Two examples of webisodes (an entertaining web-based series or featurette still meant to promote brand) related in some manner to your organization (either in regard to the organization or the aesthetic of the webisode that you can attach). The best examples would be episodic content reminiscent of a genre from television or film.

W Workshopping webisodes/pitches In-class work time for re-edits (bring timeline)

Bring: Pitch for your webisodes. The pitch includes: What genre it is similar to from television or film, the enigma/delay/resolution of narrative, conflict, characters, and the arc of the three episodes. This should be typed. Once you select a similar genre, you should begin viewing that genre and making a note of its conventions.

<u>Week 12</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
M	Logging footage	Assign Continuing Content / Demo Reel

Bring: 1. A sheet noting the camera, acting, editing, graphics, and sound techniques of your selected genre. Note a minimum of three sources (television episodes, films) from which you came to these conclusions.
2. Footage from your first webisode on your external hard drive or computer with Adobe CC ready for in-class editing time. Again, it must be on your hard-drive.

W Webisode editing and feedback

Bring: 1. Complete footage and assembly edit of your first webisode for feedback.
2. A link to a video in a genre from which you are pulling (to compare looks, feel, and pacing).

<u>Week 13</u>		
M	In-class viewing	Webisode 1 due

Bring: After watching your pilot webisode, you will give a formal pitch to the class of where the narrative structure of webisodes 2 and 3 would go.

W Continuing Content Pitch In-class re-editing time

Bring: A formal pitch about continuing certain elements of your mediated brand development and rough layout of your proposed demo reel. Here, you will have selected the content that you wish to continue and subject areas/ scripts that you will be producing.

<u>Week 14</u>	
M	Recuts /reshoots/re-air/s/in-class work time

Note: All reshoots/re-air/s are due this class period (minus the webisode). If your revised project is not shown by the end of class on this date, you will receive a zero.

Bring: Your self and enjoy the polished products of your colleagues.

W Webisode 1 re-air due this class period. If your revised webisode is not shown by 2:40 p.m. on this date, you will receive a zero on it.
Mandatory in-class work time

Bring: Script for outro video with notes on what specific cutaways you will use as b-roll.

Week 15

M Mandatory in-class work time

Bring: 1. Newly shot footage to class for editing or a timeline of a continuing content project (webisode or promotional video) on a hard-drive.
2. The complete footage of your outro video on a hard-drive with script.

New Media Musing #14: How do successful brands continue producing cohesive content over the course of months and years that support brand? Map one specific example and quote a brand manager.

W Mandatory in-class work time

Bring: 1. One completed video for the continuing content project to receive feedback.
2. Newly shot footage of your other continuing content video (webisode or promotional video).

Finals

Final held at 12:30 p.m. on May 1 (Tuesday) as scheduled by the university.

In-class viewings.

Continuing Content / Demo Reel due

New Media Musing #15: Congratulations! You are now in charge of a media/PR firm and have hired an intern to do the branding work you have done this semester. Write the intern a letter providing them with advice that you have learned back when you were in their position.

This coupon entitles _____ to turn in any one assignment the next class period of CMN _____ for literally any reason. This includes all excused or unexcused reasons including, but certainly not limited to: illness, alarm clock malfunction, oversleeping, leaving for vacation, printer malfunction, funerals, weddings, "just totally spacing on it," work issues, computer explosions, not understanding an assignment, exhaustion, vehicle malfunction, or literally any reason. This coupon provides you with an extension to do the assignment (from "brings" to major projects) without question or judgment. This coupon must be attached to the late assignment.

EXTENSION COUPON

Usage Notes: There is an absolute limit of two extensions per semester.

Additional requests result in the voiding of all coupons. If you choose to use this coupon on a typically unexcused reason and then you have a family emergency / illness / some other typically excused reason, you are out of luck. Use these wisely.

Restrictions: Non-transferrable. Not valid after Week 14. Individual use only.

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