

**Brand and Creative Strategy: Embracing the Blur**  
School of Continuing Studies: Georgetown University  
MPPR-890  
Fall 2009 Syllabus 1.0

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Class Time: Tuesday, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
Term: Fall 2009  
Office hours: By appointment

**Course Description**

This course examines the blurring of roles, talents and perspectives between traditional advertising, public relations, digital, and social media - with an eye to taking on tomorrow's marketing and communications challenges. Students will learn to assess what works from creative and strategic points of view in building a compelling brand strategy. Students will recognize and define creative strategy as an integral offering in marketing and/or public relations campaign design and development. Guest lecturers will provide context on how the communications industry is evolving and what types of leaders and organizations will be best positioned to thrive in a digital future. Classes are structured around presentations, project work, and discussion accompanying reading assignments and video documentaries. Analysis of digital and integrated campaigns will familiarize students with the basic framework of the evolving communications landscape and the interplay between brand and creative strategy.

**Course Objectives:**

- Learn to distinguish what is a brand and how they are built on a creative and strategic foundation.
- Develop benchmarks for analyzing the creative process from conceptualization, creative development, to campaign implementation.
- Develop insights of where the blur is taking place in the agency world and respond in accordance with innovative thinking and value driven solutions
- Recognize the processes of design thinking, and its ability to inspire and encourage organizational and behavior transformation.
- Develop individual/team projects based on case studies, trends and best practices in brand and creative strategies
- Strengthen your abilities in presentation, critiquing creative, persuasion and communications planning
- Learn practical tips to develop a first class integrated creative and strategy department.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is critical to your success in this class. I will circulate an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class session and will begin class on time. In the event that you must miss class, please notify me as soon as possible. You will be allowed no more than two excused absences in the duration of this class, as long as you have made arrangements with me before your absence. If you miss more than two classes, each class thereafter will result in the reduction of your grade by one-third letter (e.g. A to A-). Each un-excused absence will also affect your grade by one-third letter.

### **Contacting Me**

I will not hold regular office hours, however I am available before or after class by appointment, as well as at other scheduled times during the week. The best way to reach me is by cell phone/email. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

### **Academic Resource Center**

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

### **Honor System**

Students are expected to abide by the Georgetown University Honor System. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the material and information that is posted on the Honor Council's website:

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/index.html>

### **Georgetown University Honor Pledge**

"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."

### **Being Polite**

The use of cell phones and blackberries in class is prohibited. Please turn these off before class starts. We will have a break during class where you can check messages. We will also on occasion, have guest speakers who will appreciate this as well. Regarding food, you are welcome to bring food or drink to the classroom.

### **Materials**

#### **Required Texts:**

- Daniel Pink, *A Whole New Mind* (Penguin, 2007)
- Robert Brunner & Stewart Emery, *Do You Matter? How great design will make people love your company* (FT Press, 2009)
- Kelly Mooney & Nita Rollins, *Open Brand* (New Riders, 2008)
- Thought-leader and current industry trade and academic articles will be required reading to supplement the required texts

## **Grading**

15 points – Class Participation

15 points – Blur, Brand & Trends Assessment; Final Project: Creative Brief

35 points – Midterm

35 points – Final Project (project 25 pts; presentation 10 pts)

100 points Total

## **Class Project**

Complete a special project on a specific area that represents Brand & Creative Strategy and their usage in marketing and communications. This project is not a research paper in that involves personal creativity and strategic thinking. Team projects are encouraged. Projects will be presented in the last two sessions. Each presentation could utilize digital media, debates, case studies analysis, campaign development, future prognostication, etc... Quality of presentation will be graded based on originality, media delivery, content, and course relevance. Fellow students will also provide evaluations of class presentations.

Late work will not be accepted.

## **Short Writing Assignments**

There are two writing assignment for this class. Your assignments should meet Georgetown University's standard of excellence. Please follow these guidelines for your work:

- Include student name, course number and assignment title
- Use 12-point font and 1-inch margins
- Single spaced work
- Cite references; refer to APA Style for Electronic Media ([www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org))
- Bring one hard copy of your assignment to class the day it is due and send one email copy to [steven.kostant@gmail.com](mailto:steven.kostant@gmail.com)

### ***Blurs, Brands & Trends (BBT): Written & Presentation***

To be assigned on week #3. When it is your turn to present the Blurs, Brand & Trends, students will be responsible to complete a brief 2-4 page write up of a relevant blur, brand and trend that pertains to your interest, the news or our course work. In addition to the BBT topics, your team brings to the class a brief presentation (10 minutes). You can select a particular company or organization, an industry insight, a technology or news event and how you see this BBT observation is applicable to a blur in the agency world or a brand and creative strategy. Please provide insights, rationale, and your critique. I am looking for your ability to assess the concepts we are learning in class and your recommendations. Teamwork is a strong component of this class and will benefit you tremendously as you rely on your classmates. We will determine team structures in class for both the written assignments and the final project.

### ***Final Project: Creative Brief***

Students will learn the core fundamentals of writing a creative brief for defining the creative framework of the final projects. Students and/or teams will be responsible for writing the creative brief, and presenting it for class discussion prior to developing the final project. Details of the nature of the brief will be discussed in the course. The creative brief is as the title refers -- short, concise and 'brief' 1-2pages.

## **Class Participation**

The best way to gain insights and truly grasp the nature of the blur, brands and creative strategy will come from an active two-way conversation. I will probe discussion and

positive disruption to drive innovative thinking and active participation. For those who are less comfortable speaking out in class, there will be ample ways that participation can occur through – facilitated brainstorming sessions, team activities and assigned class presentations. I believe that based on the class dynamics and subject matter that student participation will be a driver for a successful learning experience.

### **Mid-Term Exam**

The mid-term exam will be an open book exam to benchmark your understanding of the materials covered in class, reading assignments, videos, websites and guest lectures. The test will be essay questions. Details on preparation and review for the midterm will be discussed prior to the exam.

### **Schedule**

- I. Thursday September 3**  
Week #1 - Introductory Class
  - Class Introductions
  - Overview of Syllabus and Course
  - Materials Review (Required Texts)
  - Intro. to Brand Strategy
  - “Blur, Brand & Trends (BBT) Assessments and requirements – Every class, first 10 minutes discuss recent campaigns, news and trends
  
- II. Thursday, September 10**  
Week #2 – Emotions, Consumers & Persuasion  
Intro to Creative Strategy and the “Blur”  
The Persuaders, PBS Frontline  
Reading: Whole New Mind - Chapters: 1-3
  
- III. Thursday, September 17**  
Week #3 - The machine is us -- Traditional vs. Digital & Social Media  
Blur, Brands & Trends (BBT) Presentation Group #1  
The Conceptual Age  
Reading: Whole New Mind 4-6; HBR *Design Thinking*
  
- IV. Thursday, September 24**  
Week #4 – Creative Strategy + Innovation  
Ideo Case Study  
BBT Presentation Group #2  
Reading: Whole New Mind 7-9; Media Agency 2014, PHD
  
- V. Thursday, October 1**  
Week #5 – Embracing the Blur: Consumers, Communications and Control  
BBT Presentation Group #3  
Reading: Open Brand Part 1-2
  
- VI. Thursday, October 8**  
Week #6 – Creative Accountability: Personas, Research & Creative Brief  
Developing a creative brief, personas  
BBT Presentation Group #4  
Reading: Open Brand 3-4

- VII. Thursday, October 15**  
Week #7 – Midterm; Project Review  
BBT Presentation Group #4
  
- VIII. Thursday, October 22**  
Week #8 – Design Thinking & Brand Building  
Reading: Do You Matter? How great design will make people love your company: Chapter 1-4  
BBT Presentation Group #5
  
- IX. Thursday, October 29**  
Week #9 – Creative Brief Presentations  
BBT Presentation Group #6  
Final project presented
  
- X. Thursday, November 5**  
Week #10 Experience Design & Content Strategy  
BBT Presentation Group #7  
Reading: Do You Matter... Chapter 5-9
  
- XI. Thursday, November 12**  
Week #11 – Building a Creative and Strategic Organization  
BBT Presentation Group #8
  
- XII. Thursday, November 19**  
Week #12 – Predictions: Embrace the Blur - Debate  
BBT Presentation Group #9
  
- XIII. Thursday, November 26**  
Week #13 –Project Preparations  
BBT Presentation Group #10
  
- XIV. Thursday, December 3**  
Week #14 –Project Presentations  
Final Projects Presentations
  
- XV. Thursday, December 10**  
Final Project Presentations

NOTE: Please note. This syllabus will be subject to revisions. Additionally travel and guest speaker's presentations and schedules may cause date shifts.