

JOUR 640 (# 11874)
Research Methods in Strategic Communication

Fall 2019: M/W: 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
106 Military Science Building

Instructor:
Joseph Erba, Ph.D.
205A Stauffer-Flint Hall
erba@ku.edu
785-864-6520

Office hours:
-Mondays: 9:30–10:30
-Wednesdays: 1:30–2:30
-By appointment

Greetings:

Welcome to Strategic Campaigns! This course is designed to build on your previous classes in the JMC School and apply strategic communication concepts to ‘real-world’ scenarios. You will work in teams to solve the main strategic communication challenges that our client is facing.

Course description from the KU catalog:

“Students produce a campaign to solve a strategic communications problem for an established organization. Students work with an actual client to develop a campaign from the initial research to the final recommendation. By applying the knowledge, experience and skills gained in previous courses, students confirm their readiness to enter the profession. Requirement: Must obtain a grade of C (2.0) or above. Prerequisite: Senior standing, good standing in the School of Journalism and JOUR 420, JOUR 460, and JOUR 560 all with grades of C (2.0) or above.”

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Work with clients to identify, research and solve strategic communication challenges
- Work effectively in a team (provide and receive feedback and act accordingly)
- Collect, analyze and interpret secondary and primary research
- Develop a research-based strategic communication campaign meeting clients’ goals
- Develop an evaluation plan to assess your proposed campaign
- Communicate (written and oral) research results and strategic planning clearly and effectively
- Reflect on diversity matters pertaining to strategic communication (critically think about target audiences and message development)



Readings:

There is no textbook for this course. We will read various texts available via KU Library’s website, such as journal articles and book chapters, as well as materials available for free online, such as case studies, news stories and videos. We expect you to have read all the assigned material before class. This will help you better understand the day’s topic and will facilitate our discussions.



Class Expectations:

One of the main purposes of this course is to apply strategic communication skills learned in your previous classes as well as display strong critical thinking and problem solving skills. You will work in teams to address specific communication challenges faced by a ‘real-world’ client or clients. Each team will function as its own agency. You are therefore expected to take initiative and think about our projects at a high level.

You will be evaluated based on your overall team contributions and the quality of your individual work within your team. This means that if specific team members do not do their work well, these team members may receive a lower grade than their teammates. Similarly, if specific team members perform at a much higher level than other teammates, the former may receive a higher grade. While you all will be encouraged to submit confidential reviews, the instructor is solely responsible for assigning individual grades. If a team member is not contributing his/her share or is only providing sub-par content that is bringing the team down, the instructor may remove that person from the team. Based on the circumstances, the instructor may decide to have that person work on a commensurate individual assignment to complete the course objectives or to have that person retake the class another semester.

As students in the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications who are about to graduate and represent the JMC School in our field, you are expected to showcase a strong work ethic and work on your project in good conscience (good attitude will also go a long way).



Attendance and course/assignment policy:

You are expected to attend all class sessions and/or team meetings. Some absences are excused, such as illnesses accompanied by a doctor's note, family emergencies, athletic commitments, religious holidays and other similar reasons but please let me know in advance when possible so we can make arrangements to make up the missed class(es).

More than two unexcused absences will affect your final grade. Each additional absence will take away three points from your final grade. For instance, if you have three unexcused absences and your final calculated grade is 92, you will receive an 89 for the class. If you have four unexcused absences, I will deduct six points from your final calculated grade. If you have more than four unexcused absences, you are eligible to be dropped from the course.

Participation during our class sessions and during your team meetings is an important element of this course. An engaging conversation will enhance your understanding of certain concepts as well as create a healthy learning environment. Therefore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and attend team meetings prepared to work on the assignments.

During discussions, please respect the ideas of your peers. You are encouraged to challenge someone's particular reasoning as long as you stay courteous. You will not be judged on your personal opinions. However, I expect you to frame your arguments using the strategic communication concepts we will have addressed and clearly articulate the steps of your reasoning.

You are allowed to bring laptops to class as long as you use them responsibly. However, I will ask you to close your laptops during our in-class exercises. If your laptops are distracting the class, that is, if your peers are paying more attention to your computer screen than to our class, I will ban laptop use in class for everyone. As for cell phones, please put them on silent mode. If you are expecting an important call, please let me know at the beginning of class and sit next to the classroom door.

You are responsible for completing all assignments on time. Assignments are due by the start of the class session on the date indicated unless otherwise specified on our schedule. All assignments must be typed in size 12 font, double-spaced, and sent via email to erba.projects@gmail.com. You do not need to turn in a hard copy. If you are absent, you must email your assignment by the due date/time. I will mark down late assignments (10 minutes after the due date/time) by half a grade. Extensions may be granted only as circumstances warrant. If you do not

submit an assignment within 24 hours of its due date, you will automatically lose the points for that assignment.

Clear writing, free of spelling and grammatical errors is expected. The quality of your writing will affect your grade on written assignments: poor writing will result in poor grades.



Assignments:

You will complete the following assignments for your final grade (see Blackboard for guidelines):

- Class Participation & Team Contributions: 15%
- Individual Assignments: 20%
- Plansbook: 65%

Class Participation & Team Contributions: 15%

Your class participation will be evaluated based on your attendance record, preparedness for class, quality of comments and involvement in discussion and group activities, as well as other material you will share with our class.

Your team contributions will be evaluated based on the timeliness and quality of your work, response to feedback, willingness to take initiative and solve problems, as well as your peers' evaluations of your effort.

Individual Assignments: 20%

You will each work on five individual assignments: A series of questions for our client (10%); a critique of a past campaigns plansbook (30%); three short reflections (60%).

Plansbook: 65%

You will work in teams to develop a plansbook, which will include: secondary research analysis (15%); preliminary primary research analysis (15%); primary research analysis with preliminary campaign theme & strategies (15%); revised campaign theme & strategies with calendar, budget and evaluation (20%); revised strategies with calendar, budget and evaluations (15%); final plansbook (20%).



Grades:

To calculate your final grade, I will use the following scale:

A = 93-100%	C = 73-76%
A- = 90-92%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 63-66%
B- = 80-82%	D- = 60-62%
C+ = 77-79%	F = 59% or below

I will only round grades up at the 0.8 level. Therefore, your grade must reach 0.8 for me to round it up. For example, if your final grade is 89.80, I will round it up to 90.00. On the other hand, if your grade is 89.79, it will stay as it is.



Important resources:

JSchoolTech provides technical training through workshops, small-group training and online tutorials. It offers support for class assignments, as well as opportunities to apply learning in new ways. View and sign up for events [here](http://www.jourtech.dept.ku.edu/) (http://www.jourtech.dept.ku.edu/).

The Career and Outreach Office at Stauffer-Flint, Room 120, provides services for all students at the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you need assistance with resume and cover letter development, job search strategy, internships, mock interviews and LinkedIn profile, schedule an appointment with Steve Rottinghaus at steve_rottinghaus@ku.edu. Make sure to follow job and internship postings on Twitter at [@Rhaus90](https://twitter.com/Rhaus90).

J-School Generations is an annual event that brings together J-School alumni and students to connect, network and have fun. It will take place on Thursday Oct. 24 and Friday Oct. 25. Our alumni, who work in all facets of journalism and strategic communication, are eager to share their advice with you. Learn more and sign up for events [here](http://journalism.ku.edu/j-school-generations) (http://journalism.ku.edu/j-school-generations).



Academic Integrity:

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes original work, plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor(s) of this course.

Original work: The expectation when you come to this class is that you come to learn, to be creative, to stretch your imagination, and expand your skills. Therefore, all the work you do in this class must be original. That means no ‘recycling’ of assignments or papers from other classes, in the JMC School or outside the JMC School. Don’t recycle research papers, news stories, marketing plans, etc. If you conducted a study or a research paper on any aspect of strategic communication for another class, you cannot modify it for this class. Any efforts to recycle material will be regarded as academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else’s ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it were your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person’s ideas, opinions, and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due.

Fabrication and Falsification: Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. It refers to the unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.



Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance:

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

Seeking Assistance:

You are urged to attend office hours or meet with me by appointment to discuss any questions pertaining to the course, the readings, exams and assignments, or career prospects and opportunities. You should not hesitate to seek continuing assistance throughout the semester.

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at <https://disability.ku.edu/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064. The email is: achieve@ku.edu. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

Financial Aid Policy:

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office the absences of students who have stopped attending and the names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.

Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

Copying or Recording of Classroom Lectures:

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor in class and on Blackboard, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually permit students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. This also applies to any lecture notes and other content prepared by the instructor on Blackboard.

Commercial Note-Taking:

Pursuant to the University of Kansas' [Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures](#), commercial note-taking is not permitted in this course. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. Please note: note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is not the same as commercial note-taking and is not covered under this policy.

Concealed Handguns:

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with [state and federal laws](#) and [KU weapons policy](#). Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an uncocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Inclement Weather:

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

Note:

The schedule below may be modified and any potential changes will be announced in advance.

DUE: Weekly progress reports are due every Friday at 11:00 a.m.

Week I:

M. Aug. 26	Introduction & Evaluation
W. Aug. 28	Strategic communication refresher DUE: Evaluation re-do (F. Aug. 30, 11:00 a.m.)

Week II:

M. Sept. 2	No class: Labor Day
W. Sept. 4	Research refresher Preliminary discussion on client's campaign DUE: Questions for client (Th. Sept. 5, 11:00 a.m.)

Week III:

M. Sept. 9	Client meeting DUE: Team Contract
W. Sept. 11	Debriefing on client meeting Reporting secondary research and writing situation analysis Reading: Building your marketing and PR plan

Week IV:

M. Sept. 16	Team meetings (secondary research)
W. Sept. 18	Research planning & Data collection

Week V:

M. Sept. 23	Team meetings (secondary research analysis)
W. Sept. 25	Data collection (cont.) & Team meetings DUE: Secondary Research Analysis (Th. Sept. 26, 11:00 a.m.) DUE: Reflection I (F. Sept. 27, 11:00 a.m.)

Week VI:

M. Sept. 30	Team meetings (secondary research debrief and primary research progress) Reading: Made to stick: Simple Reading: Growing your business
W. Oct. 2	Thinking about other campaigns DUE: Plansbook Critique

Week VII:

M. Oct. 7	Planning: how to develop goals-objectives-strategies-tactics Reading: Social networking as marketing
W. Oct. 9	Team meetings (preliminary primary research analysis)
F. Oct. 11	Client annual fundraiser: Abe & Jake's (6:00 – 9:00 p.m.)

Week VIII:

M. Oct. 14	No class: Fall Break
W. Oct. 16	Team meetings (preliminary primary research analysis & client update) DUE: Preliminary primary research analysis (Th. Oct. 17, 11:00 a.m.)

Week IX:

M. Oct. 21	Team meetings (client update)
W. Oct. 23	Client Update

Week X:

M. Oct. 28	Team meetings (debriefing on client update) Reading: Making an ad—some finer touches
W. Oct. 30	TBA DUE: Primary research analysis with preliminary campaign theme & strategies (Th. Oct. 31, 11:00 a.m.) DUE: Reflection II (F. Nov. 1, 11:00 a.m.)

Week XI:

M. Nov. 4	Team meetings (campaign theme & strategies)
W. Nov. 6	Team meetings (campaign theme & strategies)

Week XII:

M. Nov. 11	Team meetings (calendar, budget evaluations)
W. Nov. 13	Team meetings (calendar, budget evaluations) DUE: Revised campaign theme & strategies with calendar, budget and evaluations (Th. Nov. 14, 11:00 a.m.)

Week XIII:

M. Nov. 18	Team meetings (plansbook)
W. Nov. 20	Team meetings (plansbook) DUE: Revised strategies with calendar, budget and evaluations (Th. Nov. 21, 11:00 a.m.)

Week XIV:

M. Nov. 25	DUE: Plansbook (T. Nov. 26, 11:00 a.m.)
W. Nov. 27	No class: Thanksgiving

Week XV:

M. Dec. 2	Team meetings (plansbook)
W. Dec. 4	Informal presentation rehearsal

Week XVI

M. Dec. 9	Formal presentation rehearsal
T. Dec. 10	PRESENTATION (6:00-8:00 p.m.)
W. Dec. 11	Presentation debriefing DUE: Reflection III (M. Dec. 16, 11:00 a.m.)