

USC Annenberg School for Communication  
School Of Journalism  
Journalism Advertising Copywriting  
Fall 2007 - 4 Units  
341

When: Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.- 9:50 p.m.  
Room: ASC - 231  
Instructor: John Stein

Course Objectives:

This class is for the undergraduate student who is interested in learning the role of the copywriter in the development and execution of advertising ads and campaigns across all mediums. There will be numerous copywriting assignments given in print, radio and television. The concept of the creative team (copywriter and art director) will be introduced and its origin examined. The creative brief and its role will be studied. The role of the advertising agency in developing, maintaining or shifting a client's brand image will also be explored, with an emphasis on the copywriter's role in the process. Presentations of your ideas will be integral to class participation. Students will work both independently and in teams.

Recommended Readings:

Adweek and Advertising Age magazine, Adweek.com and AdAge.com  
Archive Magazine, Communications Arts, advertising award annuals including The One Show, D&AD, Art Director's Annual

Other relevant reading material will be assigned in class throughout the term.

## Grading

Final grade will be determined based on the following:

Class Participation/Attendance	20%
Assignments	30%
Midterm	20%
Final Project	30%

A final letter grade will be assigned based upon traditional values:

A	94% and up
A-	90 - 93%
B+	86 - 89%
B	83 - 85%
B-	80 - 82%
C+	78 - 79%
C	72 - 77%
C-	70 - 71%
D+	68 - 69%
D	62 - 67%
D-	60 - 61%

## Requirements and Ground Rules

### Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive promptly. Attendance will be taken and will impact your grade. Lecture notes will not be posted or distributed. Class participation counts towards your grade. Mutual respect in the classroom is critical. There are no bad ideas.

### Assignments

Except for the mid-term and final examination, written assignments are due the following class. They will be accepted one lecture day beyond the due date with one grade deducted. After that, assignments will not be accepted. Assignments must be typed. Importance will be placed on grammar, spelling and writing ability. Print ads referenced in the assignment must be attached (photocopies, printouts or tear sheets from a magazine/newspaper). Analysis of TV, radio or outdoor advertising must include a detailed written description of the ad. The magazine, newspaper, television program or web site in which the ad was found should also be cited. The artistic level of your completed assignments will not be graded (this is not an art class). Stick figures are fine. A typed explanation of an ad's visual is acceptable. You should be prepared to present and/or discuss your assignment in class.

### Replacement Work

It is impossible to allow for extra work to count in lieu of low performance on a

required assignment. Hence, it is imperative that you turn in your assignments regularly and work to improve course performance at the earliest sign of any concerns.

### Guest Speakers

We plan on having a number of experts in the field speak to the class. Among them will be a commercial director, agency producer, composer, copywriter and art director. Indicated below is a timetable for guest speakers. These are busy people, so some flexibility is necessary.

### Midterm

The Midterm will consist of an assignment to create an advertising campaign for a product or service. The class will be broken into mini-agencies that will work together to solve the problem and then present their solutions to the class.

### Final

For the Final the class will be broken into groups that will function as creative departments within an agency. Groups will be chosen on the 14<sup>th</sup> week, at the same time the final exam assignment is given. There will be no additional assignments; week 15 will have a guest speaker. Session 16 will be dedicated to each group's final presentation. Your grade will be based on your thinking, creativity and effectiveness of your handed-in package that encompasses all of your work. More specifically, your creative brief, group's insight and ads, with completed body copy, should make up each group's "package". Grades will be based on the presentation, the package and the individual's participation in all of the above.

### USC Policies

The following is the School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity that will be adhered to: Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence.

### USC Policies cont.

Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, purchasing papers or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade in the course and be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

Additionally, USC's policy for students with disabilities and academic accommodations cites: Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from the DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the professor as early in the semester as possible.

DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 - 5:00. The office is located in the Student Union room 301. Phone: 213/740.0776.

USC Annenberg School for Communication  
School Of Journalism  
Journalism 341 – Advertising Copywriting  
Course Syllabus

#### SESSION ONE

Course overview, expectations, grading, reading list  
The power of advertising  
Evolution of creative's role in the business  
The development of the creative team; art director and copywriter  
Conceptually-driven thinking: "ideas"  
Different "schools" of copywriting  
Review great commercials and print ads  
Assignment: Select what you think is a great ad (of any medium) and be prepared to tell the class why

#### SESSION TWO

Your client: what they do, what they make, what they sell  
Your communications partners within the agency; account service, media & planning  
The creative brief, the campaign's "backbone" (example provided)  
Strategy vs. positioning vs. execution  
Parity vs. a point of difference  
Target audience  
Review great print ads  
Assignment: Take your favorite ad and create a "brief"

#### SESSION THREE

Review assignment  
What are the elements of an ad?  
What makes an effective ad?  
Concepting an ad: idea comes first  
Definitions you need to know  
The importance of a portfolio  
Assignment: concept an ad against provided creative brief (Guest Speaker)

#### SESSION FOUR

Presentation of your ideas  
The internal presentation vs. the client presentation  
The revision process  
The selling of your idea  
Assignment: concept an ad against the creative brief provided

## SESSION FIVE

Review body copy assignment  
Branding - the emotional truth of a company  
A brand's personality  
Effective brand personalities  
Assignment: Work as a copywriter/art director team to create a campaign of print ads

## SESSION SIX

Present and review campaign assignments  
The campaign across multiple mediums  
The effective use of tv  
Review award-winning tv  
How to write tv spots  
Give out the mid-term assignment that will be presented during the eighth week of class. The class will be broken into teams that will function as mini agencies.

## SESSION SEVEN

Presentation of tv ideas, the tv storyboard  
The selection of a director: creative resources outside of the agency  
The post-production process  
No assignment

## SESSION EIGHT

Mid term exam

## SESSION NINE

Effective presentations of your ideas  
Different agencies, different cultures  
Copywriting as a career  
Assignment: write a tv spot that addresses the assignment given  
Guest Speaker

## SESSION TEN

Review assignments  
Writing radio, "theater of the mind"  
Voiceover talent  
Music, jingles, sound design  
Review award-winning radio  
Assignment: write a radio spot  
(Guest Speaker)

## SESSION ELEVEN

Review radio scripts

Creative solutions in other disciplines within the agency: BMW  
Films  
Assignment: Create a communications solution that is not an ad

#### SESSION TWELVE

Review of assignments  
A look at great outdoor examples  
How to create great outdoor  
Assignment: create an outdoor board

#### SESSION THIRTEEN

A brand's strengths and weaknesses  
Review of strong and dying brands in marketplace, a turnaround  
story  
(Guest Speaker)

#### SESSION FOURTEEN

Division into teams for the final exam  
Discussion of the final assignment, background distributed  
Formulating a pitch strategy  
Exploiting an agency's strength in new business arena

#### SESSION FIFTEEN

(Guest Speaker)

#### SESSION SIXTEEN

Presentation of final exam