FIU School of Journalism & Mass Communication
MMC 6950 Syllabus
Mass Communication Professional Projects (3 Credits)

Instructor: Grizelle De Los Reyes
Class/Time Location: No room, meetings and mode of communication will be announced
Office Location: ACII / 3rd Floor Office 339A
Office Hours: By appointment only
Phone: 305-919-4023
E-mail: gdelosre@fiu.edu

Course Description

Professional Project is designed to demonstrate the student’s excellence in an area of communication study, specifically advertising and creative work. This course provides guidelines and direction to graduate students completing their Professional Projects.

Prerequisites

Completion of 36 credit hours of the FIU Miami Ad School graduate program and in good standing

Course Objectives

1). Apply skills and concepts students have learned during their Masters program.
2). See requirements for Professional Project A Creative

Student Learning Outcomes

1). Understand relevant concepts and apply theories to contemporary issues.
2). Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
3). Think critically, creatively and independently.
4). Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.

SJMC Diversity Statement

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC) fosters an environment of inclusivity and respect for diversity and multiculturalism. The SJMC educates students to embrace diversity and understand the root causes of discrimination, as well as social, ethnic, sexual, disability and gender-based exclusion.
Text & Readings

This syllabus includes information that will guide the student through all necessary steps required for the successful completion of the professional project. Project guidelines are included, as they are also available on the SJMC website. Please read these documents carefully. They offer all of the information needed to successfully complete your project.

Students will work independently and closely with the professor on all aspects of their professional projects during your semester of graduation. Make sure that you follow guidelines and instructions from your instructor and professional project chair.

You will also need to hand in 3 completed and bound copies of your finalized professional project at the due date listed on the syllabus. Bound copies have to be connected with a black spiral, a black back page and a clear cover. A grammar/punctuation reference book, Associated Press (AP) and American Psychological Association (APA) style manual, dictionary and thesaurus will also be beneficial for you.

Communication with the Instructor

It is University policy for faculty to communicate with students via FIU e-mail. Please check your email for communications from your instructor. If you use another e-mail provider, please link your FIU e-mail with your personal e-mail so communication is forwarded.

My preference is to be contacted via email and to make appointments, if needed (either in person or via phone). I urge you to contact me if you need guidance or direction on any issue concerning your project. I should be able to get back to you within a 24-48 hour window.

Review of Previous Professional Projects

Students are highly encouraged to review previous professional projects EARLY in the semester to get a feel for the high standards of professional work typically expected as well as how other students have organized their projects. You may find these in the Resource Center on the 3rd floor of ACII.

Grades

The final grade is based on the student’s ability to master the cumulative intellectual and professional skills presented in our master’s program as demonstrated through the professional project. A passing grade for the professional projects is a B- and above. In order to graduate from the GSC Creative Track and FIU you have to have a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average.

The following grade scale will be used: A-F.

Note: No late papers will be accepted. You have to submit each draft round on the date specified. 
If you miss the deadline, you get no feedback and risk failing or receiving an incomplete at the end of the semester. Please read and sign the form on the last page of this syllabus indicating you...
have read and understand this.

Ethical Conduct & Plagiarism

Academic Honesty: In meeting one of the major objectives of higher education, which is to develop self-reliance, it is expected that students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work. Student must follow the Standards of Conduct described in the student handbook. (http://www.fiu.edu/~sccr/standards_of_conduct.htm). Students are expected to use all resources, including books, journals, and computers only in legal and authorized ways. Participants are expected to perform individual assignments without consulting each other. This practice “homogenizes” the thinking brought to the class, negatively impacting the discussion and our learning experience. Participants in this course are also reminded that materials may not be pasted or paraphrased from printed, electronic or any other sources without appropriate citations and credits. The use of literature, notes, aids, or assistance from other sources should be clearly identified with respect to all course assignments and examinations. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in penalties as set forth by University policies.
FIU MAS PROGRAM - PROFESSIONAL PROJECT HOUSE RULES

- **COMMUNICATION:** Professor Grizelle De Los Reyes will serve as your Professional Project Chair. Please email me (preferred gdelosre@fiu.edu) or call me (Office 305-919-4023) if you have any questions along the process. Communicate with time and do not leave anything to the last minute. Plan ahead and be proactive!

- **INDIVIDUAL WORK:** Even though you will be working in teams for the MAS presentation, the FIU professional project requirement is individual work.

- **EDITS:** Your project will be evaluated and approved based on specific criteria, and one of the most important is proper grammar and style. In order to work efficiently together, please keep in mind, that **I AM NOT AN EDITOR.** Work with an editor/proof reader before you submit the required draft. **SPELLCHECK!** When I start reviewing your project, I will stop at the third error and will return your work at the expense of missing important deadlines. *FIU Center for Excellence in Writing is a very good resource but plan ahead and make an appointment with plenty of time, keeping in mind submission deadlines. Visit their website at [www.writingcenter.fiu.edu](http://www.writingcenter.fiu.edu)/

- **DEADLINES:** You must meet your deadlines as part of the satisfactory completion. Not meeting deadlines will affect your final grade.

- **FINAL BOUND COPIES:** You are NOT to submit your bound copies until you are given the final approval. The professional project is a process that will include three rounds of edits. If you were given the first round of edits and proceeded to make the changes without having my final approval, understand that it is not final. You will proceed to make 3 bound copies when you are given the final approval from me, at your expense.

- **TOPIC:** You will choose a client or campaign you have worked on with teams at MAS. Present the selected campaign to me for approval prior to starting to write your professional project document. Even though you worked as part of a team, the document is written individually. Also, know that the primary research has to be sufficient to be able to use as topic for your professional project. See next bullet.

- **USE OF RESEARCH:** The ideal use of research is to probe the consumer before you produce a creative strategy and creative work and use the post-research for A/B testing, meaning which creative produces a better reaction with the target. Keep this advice in mind and do not leave the use of research as an afterthought. In the real world as you already know, conducting consumer research before you produce any creative work can avoid costly misjudgments in strategy and production. Be as thorough as you can and make good use of research for the MAS creative project as well as the FIU Professional project (whether primary / secondary / qualitative / quantitative). We also understand the time and budget/resources limitations, as well as the fact that your Account Planners will be controlling the research. Aim to be as involved in the process as you can, especially as you work on secondary data. If you include key findings in chart or graph form, they must have narrative explanations before the graph or chart. All data, listing sources or borrowed ideas must be cited using APA style, in both the body of the plan and at the end of the plan. If it’s doesn’t come from your head, you need to credit someone else with the thought, idea, statement or research.

- **RELEVANCE:** Include information that is relevant to the project and not just to fill space.

- **WRITING STYLE:** This is a professional report. Do not write in creative copywriting style. Do not personalize using “we”, “our” much less “I”. Generally, write in past tense. By the time someone reads this document, the research already happened.
• **FORMAT:** First two rounds to be submitted in WORD without creative work to track edits and changes. Last submission will include creative work.

• **FORMS/SUBMISSIONS:**
  - Academic Honesty
  - Three Bound Copies of Final Approved Professional Project
  - Syllabus Receipt and Understanding

*WRITING RESOURCE: visit the Center for Excellence in Writing to make an appointment https://writingcenter.fiu.edu/
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Project Orientation Academic Honesty Form due</td>
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<td>Will collect during orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic Approval: Decide and inform which project type you will complete: A or B</td>
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<td>Email submission delivered to:</td>
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<td>Only these Sections are Due:</td>
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<td>- Title Page</td>
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<td>- Table of Contents</td>
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<td>- Executive Summary</td>
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<td>- Introduction</td>
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<td>- Problem Statement</td>
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<td>- Situation Analysis (Secondary Research)</td>
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<td>- Problems and Opportunities (SWOT)</td>
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<td>First Full Draft due (all sections – no creative)</td>
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<td>Second Full Draft due with edits completed (all sections – no creative)</td>
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<td>Email submission delivered to:</td>
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<td>Final Submission With edits completed (all sections with creative)</td>
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<td>Email submission delivered to:</td>
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<td>External Revision</td>
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<td>Bound Copies Due (MUST be submitted in order to graduate)</td>
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<td>Bound Final Copies delivered to:</td>
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Prof Grizelle De Los Reyes
gdelosre@fiu.edu

Bound Final Copies delivered to:
Prof Grizelle De Los Reyes
JMC –BBC campus
3000 NE 151st St AC II 3rd Floor
North Miami, Fl 33181
Project Format

**Project types**

Student professional projects may take one of two forms:

A. Professional Project (examples include: communications or public relations audit, case study, crisis management or campaign plan, etc.)

B. Research paper

Both types involve research; however, in project type A (professional project - creative), research plays a supporting role for making professional (creative) recommendations. The project type B (research thesis paper) is a research-only project that focuses on conducting primary research to address a global strategic communications, public relations or advertising objective. The ultimate design and content of the professional project is up to the student and the faculty member assigned to the class.

Following is the format you must follow for a campaign-creative type professional project. This project involves research as support for the creative strategy that resulted in the creative work included in the recommended campaign.

**Format for Program Type A: Campaign/Creative/AdMasters**

This is a professional report style project. The format is similar to the format typically employed in proprietary communication campaigns. The following outline represents major components of the project type. Ultimately, the format for Program A is between the student and the committee chair and may deviate from the following outline only with chair approval. Use a consistent style; APA or Associated Press style is acceptable.

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Problem Statement
- Situation Analysis (Secondary Research)
- Problems and Opportunities (SWOT)
- Primary Research (Plan on conducting focus groups and individual interviews of at least X people with additional X completed surveys minimum for quantitative support.)
  - All methodologies
  - Describe composition of participants (age, ethnicity, city of residence, psychographic information), include graphs, pie charts and other visuals
  - Include discussion guide or questionnaire
  - Include findings and conclusions
- Findings
- Recommendations
  - Must include the creative brief and all creative tactics or executions
  - Outline Campaign Objectives and Creative Strategy
Structured a Campaign Plan (Project Type A) – GSC Program

Below is the structure to organize and assemble your professional project book. However, it is critical to make sure all of the information you gathered, the analysis you did, and the conclusions/recommendations you are making are presented in a logical manner.

Your campaign plan both tells a story and makes a case. You might know something, but if it isn’t down on paper or presented in a logical manner, it won’t make sense to the readers. The most important point for your creative project is that the creative execution is rooted on a solid creative strategy. Likewise, all assertions in your book MUST be attributed – if they are not, your book will read like the opinion page of The Miami Herald, instead of the factual analysis and decision-making tool it should be.

Of utmost importance is to give credit and attribution whenever you “borrow” ideas or material from others. Please remember that committing plagiarism will have serious implications. With that in mind, below are all of the sections and subsections a typical campaign plan includes. The major “sections” of the plan are in bold.

1. **Title Page**
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Executive Summary** - A short summary of the entire plan, describing the process undertaken to conduct the study and brief reference to select recommendations; usually the last item to be prepared, but the first item in the book. The purpose of this section is for the reader to get the full scope of the project in summary form.
4. **Introduction:** The purpose of the introduction is to establish a context (general background information), preview the content of the paper, and frame the significance of the research and the project in general. You may tell why this problem has been a problem or why you think this particular slant or angle to the problem is important. You can also mention what benefits are to be gained from solving this problem or exploring this topic from your perspective. A well-written introduction provides a blueprint for the entire paper. All documents must be able to stand on their own by including an introduction to orient the reader.
5. **Problem Statement** - Describes, as succinctly but as thorough as possible, the problem facing the client and the issue to be tackled with this plan.
6. **Situation Analysis** - Contains in-depth data and information to illustrate the problem and the client overview of the current situation. Includes “benchmarks” relevant to the company or
industry. Typically includes all items pertaining to **secondary research.** Include images, graphs and charts, if relevant:

- Company analysis (history, mission, vision, values, organization, IMC resources)
- Product, brand, and/or service analysis (history, description, growth, historical sales, volumes)
- Analysis of existing markets/buyer behavior/current user evaluation (demographics, geo-demographics, psychographics, seasonality)
- Competitive analysis (competitive sales, competitive media, direct/indirect competitors, category analysis)
- Pricing analysis, if appropriate
- Analysis of past IMC and overall communications efforts
- Market and environmental analysis; market opportunity analysis if it’s a new product to be launched
- Other information gathered in secondary research
- Implications and guide or rationale for primary research

7. **Problems and Opportunities**: Presented in a SWOT format (summarizes internal strengths and weaknesses of the company, product or service, and external opportunities and threats facing the organization, the industry, and/or the environment.) NOTE: The findings and SWOT form the basis for justifying the recommendations to be presented in the next sections.

8. **Primary Research**:

- Research Objectives (What did we want to find out? What are the research questions addressed with this research?)
- Methodology (How, where, when, and who did we consult to find it out?)
- Sample described to include composition of participants (age, ethnicity, city of residence, psychographic information)
- Include discussion guide or questionnaire, questions asked
- Plan on conducting focus groups and individual interviews of at least X people with additional X completed surveys minimum for quantitative support.

9. **Findings**: KEY research findings, observations, and results (whichever is appropriate). Include images, graphs and charts, if relevant, and must have narrative explanations before.

10. **Recommendations**: Implications (THOROUGH analysis of all of the research leading to the creative strategy that resulted in the creative work submitted) presented in this format. This section includes the a well written Creative Brief and all the Creative Work with explanations:

- Creative Brief with all questions answered thoroughly. Follow this structure and include the creative brief questions:
  - IMC Objectives: why are we advertising? What must the communications campaign achieve with each target market to accomplish the program goal? What can IMC really do to achieve the overall goals?
• Target market profile: who are we engaging with? Demographic, geodemographic, psychographic and behavioristics -- listed and described in DETAIL
• IMC Goal: what do we want them to think and do as a result? Goals must be explained (these may already exist within the company). What is the desired outcome the company hopes to achieve?
• IMC Strategies: This section includes the unique sales proposition, Image and reputation messages. What do we want to communicate? How should we say it? When and where should we engage them?

- Creative Tactics or Executions: Include all the Creative Work with brief explanation for each. Advertising/Public Relations/Sales Promotion, Merchandising and Point of Sale/Direct Marketing/Event Marketing Recommendations - Include objectives, creative strategy, all advertising media to be used, all public relations tactics to be deployed, all sales promotion tactics to be carried out including but not limited to special events, exhibitions, and trade shows. Include ALL fully executed samples, as applicable, for each discipline used.
  - Strategy #1
    - Advertising tactics
    - Sales promotion, merchandising and point-of-purchase tactics
    - Direct marketing tactics to include all collateral materials
    - Event marketing tactics
    - Digital and mobile tactics
    - Other tactical recommendations – sponsorships, partnerships, personal selling, viral marketing, packaging, word-of-mouth, etc.

11. **Limitations**: In this section, include the limitations (for example) time constraints and budget to conduct more extensive research, budget parameters (if applicable), performance measures limitations (are you able to set measurement of effectiveness)

12. **Appendix**: Appendices, footnotes, research, survey questionnaire, summary of responses/data collection, and all other relevant supporting material including client brief

13. **Student Bio**: your biography as well as professional aspirations
Format for Program Type B: Research or Thesis

Description: The project type B (research paper) is a research-only project that focuses on conducting primary research to address a global strategic communications, public relations or advertising objective. The ultimate design and content of the professional project is up to the student and the faculty member assigned to the class. Use a consistent style; APA or Associated Press style is acceptable.

The proposal should:
- Have no more than two pages; no cover page
- Have student name and student ID number on the first page; proposal title and project type (A or B)
- Be factual (do not include opinions in proposal)
- Be stated in terms of something you want to provide answers for or something you would like to solve in the global strategic communications, public relations or advertising fields

The proposal should be outlined as follows:
- Introduction – should contain a clear purpose statement
- Background
- Opportunity to be addressed (or issue to be researched)
- Objective
- Proposed research methods and design
- Anticipated analysis

Common mistakes to avoid:
- Background section is the best place to highlight some of the initial research that has already been completed.
- In the Opportunity to be addressed (or issue to be researched) section, you need to identify a global strategic communications, public relations or advertising problem, issue or challenge that can be communicated in four sentences (maximum).
- Proposed research methods and design section needs to be thought through carefully – what is realistic given the timeframe.
- Creative work only applies only as a deliverable of project type A if applicable.

Project type B: Research plan

This format follows a traditional, scholarly format as seen in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. Use APA style only.
- Title page
- Table of contents
- Abstract
- Introduction (purpose statement)
- Literature Review: Google Scholar is your best resource
- Methodology (research questions)
- Results
• Discussion and implications for professional practice
• Conclusion (including limitations and recommendations)
• Appendix
• Student bio
• Final defense signature page
CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Introduction This Code of Academic Integrity was adopted by the Student Government Association on November 28, 2001 and reflects the values articulated in the Student Code of Standards. Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of Florida International University, and Miami Ad School in this specific case. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook. With your signature below you acknowledge having read and understanding the clauses of this agreement

- I will be honest in my academic endeavors.
- I will not represent someone else’s work as my own.
- I will not cheat, nor will I aid in another’s cheating.
- I understand all deadlines in this class are extremely firm.
- I understand that if I do not hand in the various drafts of my professional project on the due dates I will NOT receive feedback from the instructor.
- I understand that all sections due must be emailed in WORD format (no PDF).
- I understand that without feedback from the instructor I risk failing and not graduating on time and that anything below a B- is not a passing grade for the professional project.
- I understand that I will not submit bound final professional project until I get the final approval from the Instructor/Professional Project Chair.

___________________  __________
Signature            Date
TITLE OF PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

By

Student’s Name

Chair: Name of Professional Project Chair
Additional Reviewer: Name will be provided

A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT PRESENTED TO
THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION
OF FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

[Semester & Year]