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New frontiers in brand communication and consumer engagement

PROF. STEFANIA VITULLI

OVERVIEW

Area: Marketing, Communication and Media

Dates: 13 – 23 June (2 weeks)

Campus: Milan

Course Number: CM / MK 300

Term: Summer School 2017

Credits: 6 ECTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course provides an overview of the latest trends in the brand communication scenario and the role experience, emotions and entertainment play in building consumer-brand relationships. A particular focus will be given on content marketing, storytelling, autofiction and social media to discover how innovative and unconventional brand communication initiatives can support brands in engaging and activating consumers as dialogical partners. Contents are designed to encourage students to reflect on current dramatic changes in the field of consumer-brand relationships from a humanistic perspective, and to enact these changes in their own communication projects.

COURSE CONTENTS

- Lesson 1:** Course presentation and introduction. What is a brand? - What is an emotion?
- Lesson 2:** Introduction to brand communication: product/brand and their roles, brand positioning, brand equity. Brand experience throughout suppliers. Case histories.
- Lesson 3:** Customer intelligence in a customer-driven marketplace. From Consumer to Prosumer: how stakeholders and shareholders co-create brand value. Focus on storytelling: what is a story? - Why are we stories? - Why do we look for stories to live? - Why do we look for stories to buy? The art of immersion: how the digital generation is remaking the way we tell stories.
- Lesson 4:** The role of storytelling in marketing communication: what changed. On-line dialogue and brand communities. COMPANY VISIT EXPECTED
- Lesson 5:** Exhibit design: how to create a narrative space as tool of brand engagement. Guest speaker expected.
- Lesson 6:** Midterm Exam
- Lesson 7:** A classical tool to create brand engagement and the social network perspective: a best practice in sponsorship of arts. Guest speaker expected.



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- Lesson 8:** The second screen: how social tv changed our media perception. Guest speaker expected.
- Lesson 9:** A conversation agency: how to help brands to listen, understand and engage in conversations in social media. COMPANY VISIT EXPECTED
- Lesson 10:** Final Exam

PREREQUISITES

None

TEACHING METHODS

Interactive lessons with role playing in case study analysis, essays writing and presentation, and group discussions. Presentation of case studies by guest speakers. A list of references focused on environmental communication and green marketing will be indicated during the course.

GRADING

Class participation	30 % of final grade
Individual/group assignments	25 % of final grade
Midterm and final written exam	40 % of final grade

COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

The lecturer's slides, readings and essays for exams and assignments will be available on Blackboard.

Individual Assignments

In order to test abilities in public speaking, use of creative tools, content comprehension and research, students will have to work on individual assignments, that will require a classroom presentation or a written paper.

Group Assignments

In order to foster cooperative learning and an in-depth study of a particular topic of interest, students will be responsible for participating in group presentations. Each group will consist of 2/4 students; the final products could be slides, videos, creative tools or strategies. Groups could have the occasion to present to guest speakers of the companies on which the assignments are based and their works would receive a total final grade given from speakers and from the instructor.

Mid-Term Test

The Midterm Test will consist of two open questions to test basic knowledge and comprehension of course material and theoretical topics. The test will take about 90 minutes.



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Final Exam

The final exam will consist of two open questions to test basic knowledge and comprehension of the whole course: theoretical and case histories topics. The first question will be about one/more of the theoretical concepts of the second part of the course. The second one will require to create the guidelines of a brand engagement strategy and will be open books. The test will take 4 hours.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Exam Date: The exam date cannot be re-scheduled. Unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. In cases of unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury on the day of the exams, the student must submit a medical certificate and communicate his/her absence to the Professor and UCSC International Office via email **prior** to the exam. If the student does not justify his/her absence through sufficient documentation and with adequate notice before the final test, the student will receive an automatic Failed.

Important:

No reset exams will be allowed unless an unambiguous medical report is presented. Students who will miss the examinations for non-medical reasons will not have the opportunity to rewrite. Medical exemptions will require documentation. Alternative forms of examination can be considered only in exceptional cases, and upon the instructor's directions.

BIO OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Stefania Micaela Vitulli is a creative consultant and journalist. She is contract professor of Business Communication at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, where she teaches also Green Communication and Publishing Communication. She is research fellow at LabCom, UCSC, and professor and Senior Tutor at the Master in Corporate Communication, UCSC. She is the author of articles and academic papers on green communication and sustainability.

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