

SYLLABUS | COMM 2331

Strategic Communication Principles Summer 2026 Session 2: 8-week term | 3 credit hours | Online Asynchronous

Instructor: Lucy Brown, M.A.
Email Address: brown.8728@osu.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

TA: Elli Ji
Email Address: ji.620@osu.edu
Office Hours:

Time: Fridays 9:30 AM – 11:30AM

Zoom link:

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/91847382421?pwd=bSJEIHJ4UCxwH3h2bOXbrNKj5BYTrT.1>

Meeting ID: 918 4738 2421

Password: 850496

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Description

The role of strategic communication in business, including basic principles of integrated marketing, theory, and ethical standards. Prereq: Not open to students with credit for 431. This course will help students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition in an applied setting to the better understand the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

This is a condensed, eight-week version of what is normally a full-length 16-week course. Please keep that in mind, and be prepared to do a lot of work in a short amount of time (see assignments and calendar). If your lifestyle cannot accommodate that, I would not recommend the summer version of this course.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course introduces students to the general field of strategic communication from a business perspective, with an emphasis on integrated marketing communications, message design, and advertising. The course is a basic survey course that covers a wide-range of theory, practice,

and research methods associated with strategic communication. COMM 2331 also counts as a Lived Environment category within the New General Education (GEN) requirements.

The goals and expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of the Lived Environment category expect that upon completion of this class, successful students will be able to:

Goal 1. Analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component.

- ELO 1.1. Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
- ELO 1.2. Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

Goal 2. Integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

- ELO 2.1. Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
- ELO 2.2. Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

Goal 3. Explore a range of perspectives on the interactions and impacts between humans and one or more types of environment (e.g., built, cultural, intellectual, natural) in which we live.

- ELO 3.1. Engage with the complexity and uncertainty of human-environment interactions.
- ELO 3.2. Describe examples of human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time and across space.

Goal 4. Analyze a variety of perceptions, representations, and/or discourses about environments and humans within them.

- ELO 4.1. Analyze how humans' interactions with their environments shape or have shaped attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors.
- ELO 4.2. Describe how humans perceive and represent the environments with which they interact.
- ELO 4.3. Analyze and critique conventions, theories, and ideologies that influence discourses around environments.

These goals will occur in this course as students gain a:

1. Basic understanding of the principles and practice of integrated marketing communications, target marketing, and branding
2. Familiarity with strategic communication research methods
3. Basic understanding of theories of consumer decision-making, communication and social influence, and message design in strategic communication contexts
4. Basic understanding of how mediated communication channels such as mass media, public relations/publicity, advertising, digital and social media, and corporate advertising are employed for strategic communication and promotion.

5. Familiarity of the social and ethical dimensions of strategic communication to vulnerable populations (e.g. women, ethnic and racial minorities, children)
6. Practiced demonstrating analytical and writing skills commonly employed in strategic communication industries.

Mode of Delivery

This course will be presented **fully online** in an **asynchronous** format. There will be no set meeting times or live components.

How this Course Works

- This course will use Carmen, and is organized in weekly modules.
- Once a module is released, content may be completed any time prior to the due date.
- Lectures are recorded videos, which will be posted weekly.
- Initial discussion posts will always be **due on Wednesdays by 11:59 PM**. Late discussion posts will not be accepted.
- Discussion post replies, writing assignments, quizzes, and exams are always **due on Sundays at 11:59 PM**. See late policy section of this syllabus for information regarding late work or requesting extensions.

Required Course Materials

Belch, G. & Belch, M. (2021). *Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective (12th Edition)*. McGraw Hill

The textbook is available as an eBook through the university bookstore through the link below. The bookstore also has several hard copies on hand that you can request if you prefer a physical book. Please make sure that you purchase the 12th edition of the book rather than the 13th (which is much more expensive and has slightly different content). If you are having issues with affordability, I encourage you to reach out to me.

Link to Textbook:

https://ohiostate.bncollege.com/c/Advertising-and-Promotion/p/MBS_3074726_dg

Assignment Overview and Descriptions

Group Discussions: 10 points each x 8 = 80 points
Quizzes: 10 points each x 6 = 60 points
SWOT Analysis: 30 points
Writing Assignments: 30 points each x 2 = 60 points
Final Reflection: 20 points
TOTAL Points: 250

Learning Quizzes

There will be six quizzes throughout the course testing your knowledge, each worth ten points. They will consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions. Quizzes are **not** timed and are open-note, but you will only get one chance to complete them. The quizzes will open when the module opens and close on the **Sunday they are due at 11:59 PM**.

Learning Discussions

Weekly discussions are intended to help students draw connections between themes and topics for the week, as well as get opportunities to interact with peers. Points are awarded for the initial post (4 points) and responses to two peers in your group (3 points each)

Initial discussion posts are due every Wednesday at 11:59 PM EST. Excellent discussion posts will thoroughly address the entire prompt in at least one paragraph. Excellent work will also use citations from readings and lectures to provide evidence. **Late submissions will NOT be accepted**, so do not wait until the last second to post.

Response posts to two group members are due by that Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST.

Excellent work provides a direct response specifically addressing the insights of the peers post in at least one paragraph. No submissions will be accepted after four days without a documented reason.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis is a short video assignment that asks students to assess the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of an organization/ brand. The purpose, intent and best practices of a SWOT Analysis will be covered in lecture and readings prior to the assignment. In about five minutes (in a video recording with presentation slides), students will identify these elements and provide a summary and synthesis of the strategic position and brand status that discusses how you leverage strengths and minimize weaknesses to take advantage of opportunities and address threats as identified in each section. A detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be provided on Carmen.

Short Papers

Rather than taking an exam or completing a final project, students will be asked to complete two more short 2-3 page writing assignments. You will be given a series of prompts from which you can choose (listed later in the syllabus), covering different aspects of the course content. They will be due over the course of the semester, but students should plan ahead. A detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be provided on Carmen.

Extra Credit

Students may earn a maximum of five points of extra credit by completing this prompt: Find a local advertising agency or PR firm. Contact the agency to (*politely and professionally!*) ask for an interview with a team member whose career you are interested in. Either over email or Zoom. Ask them at least five specific questions about their position.

Then, in a 2-3 page essay, describe how it went and what you learned from them. You must also include evidence that you did actually do this (e.g., an email, a screenshot of a zoom meeting if you have permission, your outgoing call history with the length of the call listed, etc.). I would suggest reaching out at least two weeks before the end of class. If you don't receive a response in time, contact me (Lucy) for backup options.

Grading and Feedback

For weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **1 week** from the due date. For written and video assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **2 weeks** from the due date. **Please check for comments on your assignments when you get them back.**

Late Work Policy

All deadlines are in Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Late initial discussion posts and quizzes will NOT be accepted without proper documentation and will receive a 0. Late discussion replies will result in the grade being halved. For all short papers, there will be 10-point deduction for every day the submission is late. No submissions will be accepted after four days without a documented reason.

If you are in need of an accommodation or other extension regarding a due date, please email Ellie or me (Lucy) with your request at least **24 hours before** the due date. If an emergent situation occurs, please notify us as soon as it is safe and possible to do so, but **no more than one week after the original due date.**

It is your responsibility to proactively keep us updated and aware of any situations that could result in late work (e.g., illness, family emergencies, OSU sports). That said, if there is a death in your family, you are not required to submit an obituary. Similarly, if you have a health emergency, please do not send graphic photographs of your injuries as proof (yes, that has happened often enough for me to say it). A doctor's note is helpful if you are sick, but we are flexible depending on the context. Reach out to either of us with any concerns.

Grading Scale

93-100: A
90-92.9: A-
87-89.9: B+
83-86.9: B
80-82.9: B-
77-79.9: C+
73-76.9: C
70-72.9: C-
67-69.9: D+
60-66.9: D
Below 60: E

Credit Hour and Work Expectation

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy, students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of I average. [ASC Honors](#) provides an excellent guide to scheduling and study expectations.

Student Participation Requirements

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

- **Logging in:** Be sure you are logging in to the course in Carmen each week, including weeks with holidays or weeks with minimal online course activity. I suggest logging in at least twice per week to make sure you are keeping up with announcements and course content. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*. Yes, I can see who is and is not logging in and doing things.
- **Participating in discussion forums:** At minimum, you can expect to post at least once by Wednesday and respond at least once by Sunday as part of our substantive class discussion. This requires that you will check in twice per week, however, additional participation will give you a richer experience within the course.
- **Reading:** Textbook readings are listed in the syllabus and supplemental readings will be posted on Carmen. It is expected that you will complete the readings prior to engaging with any other materials for the week. Lectures are intended to go in-depth on topics, not to replace the readings or cover each and every topic fully. You must read to have the background knowledge to interact with the topics through lecture and activities.
- **Reviewing the module contents and weekly overview:** There will be a module for each week of the course in Carmen under Modules. Everything you need for the week will be in the module, unless otherwise stated in the Weekly Overview. The Weekly Overview will serve as an introduction and checklist for the week. You will receive information about what will be covered, learning objectives met and due dates for the week. You should plan to view these overviews by Monday evening at the latest to be sure you are prepared for the week's tasks and due-dates
- **Viewing lectures:** All lectures for this course are recorded and will be posted to Carmen at within the corresponding weekly module. Some lectures, or lessons, are in a written format with links to articles, videos and embedded materials to aid your interaction with the material with current real-life examples.
- **Office hours:** Your instruction team is available to help you to learn, understand, and grow as individuals. Office hours are digital via Carmen Zoom. I (Lucy) am on campus for a limited amount of time most weeks. Email to request an in-person meeting.

Instructor Communications

We (me – Lucy the instructor – and Ellie the TA) will reply to emails within **1 business day** (i.e., within 24-hours, Monday-Friday). If a business day has passed without a response, feel free to send a polite follow-up. Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a pressing technical problem.

Class updates and/or additional materials will be posted as announcements on Carmen. I recommend having these set up to forward to your OSU email. Please check Carmen and read your email regularly (at least 2-3 times per week) because you are responsible for this information, just as you are responsible for information in class.

Common issues to avoid...

- **Carmen mail/messenger, assignment submission comments.** These are unreliable forms of communication, and we may miss your message. **Please use email.**
- **Weekend and evening emails.** Under most circumstances, your instructors will respond to messages of this sort on the next business day.
- **Sending emails NOT from your OSU email.** Messages to our OSU accounts from non-OSU email services are regularly marked as spam and since their OSU cannot confirm their delivery, you may not use them as evidence of communication attempts.
- **Emails that require immediate attention.** We aim to answer emails within 24 hours of receipt on business days. Be proactive and plan ahead (especially with Sunday deadlines).

Challenging a Grade

As noted above, you can generally expect grades and feedback within 1 week of submitting the assignment (or 2 weeks for written assignments). I am always willing to discuss your grades or the feedback you receive during office hours or a scheduled appointment. To challenge a grade, you must send me an email **no sooner than 24 hours after the grade is posted to Carmen** to schedule a time to meet. This waiting period gives you time to digest the assignment feedback and construct an argument as to why you believe the grade should be challenged, which should be outlined in your email. **Please note that a challenge may result in grades being raised OR lowered.**

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

- **Written assignments:** All written assignments, communications, and posts should be your own original work (note that copying AI is NOT your own, original work). In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your

assignments before you turn them in – but no one other than you should revise or rewrite your work.

- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me beforehand.

Academic Misconduct (READ CAREFULLY)

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. “Academic misconduct” is illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors will report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

University rules require that we report any suspected cases of academic misconduct to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). It is NOT our job to assess intent. Any writing suspected of plagiarism will be automatically submitted to COAM.

Plagiarism as defined by the university's code of conduct is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and or paraphrasing of another person's work and or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas; submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement.”

The following are examples of work that is unacceptable, and would constitute plagiarism:

Work that has been submitted to other courses will count as plagiarism even if you were the originator of that work.

Original Text: “Families high in conversation orientation are free to interact with one another as they share ideas, participate in decision making, and express concerns, whereas families low on this orientation interact less frequently with each other on a variety of topics, including personal thoughts, feelings, and private activities,” (Schrodt, Witt, 2008, p. 31).

Plagiarism (copying the original text WITHOUT quotes even if one puts a citation. This is plagiarism since it becomes unclear if the person is trying to pass this off as his or her own writing: Families high in conversation orientation are free to interact with one another as they share ideas, participate in decision making, and express concerns, whereas families low on this orientation interact less frequently with each other on a variety of topics, including personal thoughts, feelings, and private activities (Schrodt &Witt, 2008).

Plagiarism (copying the original text and changing a few words): Families that are low in conversation are not free to share ideas because they interact less frequently with each other

on a variety of topics, including personal thoughts, feelings, and private activities (Schrodt &Witt, 2008).

Plagiarism (copying the original text and changing a few words): Families high in conversation orientation are free to talk with one another as they share ideas, participate in decision making, and express concerns, whereas families low on this orientation talk less frequently with each other on a variety of topics, including personal thoughts, feelings, and private activities (Schrodt &Witt, 2008).

NOT Plagiarism: A high conversation orientation indicates that communication within families is open. New topics are discussed with ease. Conversely, families with lower conversation orientation communicate less frequently and less openly (Schrodt &Witt, 2008).

Not Plagiarism (use of quotations and citation): “Families high in conversation orientation are free to interact with one another as they share ideas, participate in decision making, and express concerns, whereas families low on this orientation interact less frequently with each other on a variety of topics, including personal thoughts, feelings, and private activities,” (Schrodt &Witt, 2008, p. 31).

Students should take the time and care to properly synthesize information from sources selected. Copying and pasting a sentence or phrase, and then changing words is NOT an appropriate way of synthesizing information. It is a way to commit academic misconduct. If you have any further questions (e.g., if you are unsure if a section in your paper will be considered plagiarism), please do not hesitate to contact your instructors.

AI Policy (PLEASE READ)

If you are genuinely interested in a career that involves strategic communication, this course is the first step in building your foundation of knowledge. In light of that, this course focuses on active engagement with the content. You are training to run a marathon, and getting into a car and driving to the finish line will not help you – even if it gets you to the finish line faster. Your career is the marathon, and generative AI is the car. Given this, although I acknowledge the benefits of AI, use of it in this course is not permitted under ANY circumstances unless explicit permission has been given by the instructor. Use of AI without permission will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu

Ohio State’s programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from

them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services (SLDS) will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. If you have accommodations letters from SLDS, please send them to Ellie, the TA (ji.620@osu.edu). If you are visually impaired and need alt text for lecture slide content, or have another reason for needing access to the slides, please email me, Lucy (brown.8728@osu.edu). I have done my best to make the class as accessible as possible, but if you are running into any issues, do not hesitate to let me know.

The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614-292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu.

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Syllabus Disclaimer

The information provided in this syllabus constitutes a list of basic class policies. I reserve the right to modify this information when deemed necessary for any reason. You will be notified via Carmen announcement if any changes occur. If you actually read the syllabus in enough detail to see this, email Lucy and I will give you one additional point at the end of the semester.

Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences advising and academic services' website provide support for student academics success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

All students, especially those who have difficulty writing, are encouraged to visit the *OSU Writing Center*. Their web address is <https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center> and their phone

number is 688-5865. The Writing Center offers two kinds of tutorials: 1) Scheduled, 50-minute tutorials in 4120A Smith Lab and 2) Drop-in, 20-minute tutorials at our satellite centers (First floor Thompson Library and 114 Smith-Steeb Residence Hall).

Required Class Technology Assistance

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

Carmen: Carmen, Ohio State's learning management system, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). For accessibility information [visit here](#).

- Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
- This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.
- To complete online modules, you will need a computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection and a word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs (e.g., Microsoft Word, Mac Pages, Google Docs) have these abilities.
- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit [this link](#).

Self-Service and Chat support: <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>

Phone: 614-688-HELP (4357)

Email: 8help@osu.edu

TDD: 614-688-8743

Access to technology is essential for student success, particularly in an online class. Please contact me at any point if you do not have regular access to a laptop/desktop computer, it becomes disrupted, or you do not have Internet access at home. The [Student Technology Loan Program](#) provides computer loans for eligible students. You can also use [EveryoneOn.org](https://www.everyoneon.org) to find resources locally. Just enter your zip code and learn about low-cost internet access and computers in your area.

Student Well-Being Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>.

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may

Lead to diminished academic performance or reduce the students ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445).

If you are food insecure, the Buckeye Food Alliance is "an equal opportunity provider that works to ensure No Buckeye Goes Hungry. BFA works to reduce the impacts of food insecurity through outreach efforts and the operation of a client choice food pantry. The food pantry is open to all Ohio State Students and provides fresh produce, pantry staples, meat and dairy products, personal care items and more." You can schedule a food pick up by filling out the intake form on the [BFA webpage](#). If you are housing insecure, OSU also offers [funds in case of emergency](#) to keep a roof over your head. If you are facing any challenges securing food or housing and believe this may affect your performance in the class, please let me know and I will do my best to help you.

Course Calendar

Week 1: June 8-14* – Intro to IMC

- Readings: Chapter 1
- Group Introductions

Week 2: June 15-21 – Marketing Basics

- Readings: Chapters 2 & 3
- Group Discussion 1 – Product Evaluation
- Quiz 1

Week 3: June 22-28 – Consumer Behavior and Theory

- Readings: Chapters 4 & 5
- Group Discussion 2 – Target Audiences
- Quiz 2

Week 4: June 29- July 5 – Ethics

- Reading: Ways of Seeing by John Berger – Chapter 7
- Video Essay: SWOT Analysis
- Group Discussion 3 – Ways of Seeing

Week 5: July 6-12 – Source, Channel, and Message Factors

- Readings: Chapter 6
- Group Discussion 4 – Source Evaluation
- Essay: Short Paper #1
- Quiz 3

Week 6: July 13-19 – Creative Strategy

- Readings: Chapters 8 & 9
- Group Discussion 5 – Wheel of Fortune
- Quiz 4

Week 7: July 20-26 – Social Media and Measurement

- Readings: Chapters 15 & 16
- Group Discussion 6 – Your Targeted Ads
- Essay: Short Paper #2
- Quiz 5

Week 8: July 26-30* – Publicity and PR

- Reading: Chapter 17
- Group Discussion 7 – Product Evaluation 2
- Essay: Marketing You
- Quiz 6

*Note that this week ends on a Thursday rather than a Sunday. That said, assignments will still be due on Sunday August 2nd

Grade Posting Deadlines:

Graduating Students: Thursday August 6th

Non-Graduating Students: Monday August 10th

Short Paper Prompts

Instructions

You will be asked to write TWO papers based on the prompts below. You may choose any two, but you cannot choose the same prompt twice. These papers should be in essay format, with clear paragraphs and at least a brief introduction and conclusion. Each should be 2-3 pages in length and written in APA format. Unless otherwise specified, in each essay you must use at least FIVE terms you have learned in class (e.g., lectures, textbook readings, etc.). Each term must be either defined or used in a context that demonstrates you understand its meaning. The purpose of these essays are to exercise your critical thinking and creativity, so please also be sure to include your own personal perspective. More detailed instructions will be provided in Carmen.

Prompt 1: Sore Subjects

Select a specific product related to a sensitive, embarrassing, or culturally controversial topic (e.g., tampons, diarrhea medication, legal-loophole gas station drugs). Find two *different* pieces of marketing material for this product (e.g., print ad, commercial, packaging, website, etc.) and analyze how they approach their strategies given the nature of their product. For instance...

- Who is their target audience? What “need” is the product fulfilling for them? Are consumers likely to be high involvement or low involvement?
- What source, channel, and/or message factors are involved?
- What aspects of the brands SWOTs are they taking advantage of?

Be sure to discuss how the strategies employed attempt to “overcome”(or, alternatively lean into!) the context of the product. Feel free to discuss that context honestly, as long as you take the assignment seriously and are mature about it. Remember, no matter how ridiculous it is, it’s someone’s real job to market these products. Also make sure that a reader who has never heard of this product understands what it is.

Prompt 2: Words & Pictures

Design a print advertisement for ONE of the following products:

- *Dawn Damage*: A flavorful new energy drink that the brand is pitching as a way for college students to get over weekend hangovers
- *Vitabloom*: An outdated line of brightly-colored children’s multivitamins that the brand is trying to reposition to sell to adult hyper-masculine gym bros
- *Jolt*: A paid app on your phone connected to a ring that gives you a mild electrical shock if you spend too much time on social media
- *Lefty Loosey’s*: A local shop that exclusively sells products for left-handed people, such as tools, office supplies, and even instruments
- Turnips. Just. Turnips. (the Cruciferous Vegetable Association wants to improve Americans’ perceptions of turnips and spread awareness)

Feel free to invent any details about the product/brand that are not directly stated in the above prompts. The draft of your ad can either be a digital layout or a rough sketch on paper. Please also include a brief written description in case we are having trouble seeing your vision. Importantly, your design does NOT have to look like a finished product, and you will NOT be graded on the visual quality of the ad. Rather, you will be graded on the explanation of your thought-process (for instance, what outlet would your ad ideally appear in and how does that affect your design choices?)

Prompt 3: Don’t Panic

Look into an example of a real-life PR crisis (e.g., the Tylenol murder scandal). Find at least two different reputable sources, and write a short essay describing the brand itself, what the crisis was, and how the brand responded to it. Most importantly, include your own personal perspective on the PR strategies they used. For instance, do you think they responded well to the crisis? What could they have done better? What would you have done? I suggest reading chapter 17 ahead of time for this prompt. As a hint, choosing a PR crisis in which marketing *itself* was the cause of the crisis may make it easier for you to use the five required vocabulary terms.

Prompt 4: Dubious At Best

Pick a product that you consider to have morally questionable marketing practices (e.g., makeup ads that harm body image, sugary children's cereals described as healthy, disposable vape pens marketed to teens). Look into the IMC strategies for these products – advertising and/or PR. How do brands that sell these deal with (or, more likely, *avoid* dealing with) the ethics of their products and/or promotional strategies? What are your personal thoughts on this? For instance, aside from simply not selling the product at all, what could they do better, or what have they done well? If you'd like, you can also play devil's advocate. If you had no sense of morals whatsoever, how would YOU sell this product and why? What can you learn from that about how these brands use marketing manipulatively?

Prompt 5: Dead in the Water

Pick a product in the Museum of Failure (<https://museumoffailure.com/#explore>). Also find at least one other source outside of the museum about the product. In your own words, describe the product and what went wrong. Now, imagine that you work on the creative team at an ad agency, and have been assigned to this product's next campaign. The client is desperate, and has given your team complete liberty to do anything to save it (at least, anything involving marketing). What new strategies would you use to try to help make this product successful? Make sure to consider elements such as the potential target audience, the product's unique selling proposition, and/or what channel it might be marketed through best.

Prompt 6: I Forgot About This Assignment

Read a chapter of the textbook that I did not assign for class. Introduce me to at least five new terms/concepts you learned with a clear example for each of them (not including those in the textbook). What was the most interesting thing you learned? How does it connect back to other topics that we've learned about?