

The University of Texas at El Paso Communications Department
OFFICIAL COURSE OUTLINE AND INFORMATION

COMM 4330 CRN 21991 – Media Planning & Buying – Spring 2025 10:30 – 11:50
Tuesdays & Thursdays, Classroom Building 3C01

Instructor: Sondra Jones

Phone: 915-747-5490 (best to reach me via email)

email: skjones@utep.edu

Office: 205 Cotton Memorial

Office Hours:

You'll find me in Cotton Memorial in room 205, just to the left of the front doors. I'm for certain in the office during the hours below, but I'm often around at other times. You're welcome to drop in!

And of course, I'm available by appointment, either in person or remote. Email me at skjones@utep.edu to schedule. My office hours that are set aside specifically to meet with you are:

- Tuesdays 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm
- Wednesdays 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

If these times aren't convenient, I'm available by appointment. Please talk to me or email me to set a time.

I respond to email within 24-48 hours of seeing your email. Again, my email is skjones@utep.edu. (Please be careful NOT to use my old Miners email, which remains active)

Department Office:

Room 201/Cotton Memorial
747-5129

What This Course Is About

We are all media experts in complete control of our media "cloud." As marketers and advertisers, we seek to penetrate that cloud to make meaningful connections with our consumers. But as consumers we are increasingly saying, "not so fast."

As advertising professionals, we all must be media aware. Gone are the days when you can walk in with your storyboard and sell your campaign. The medium now really is the message.

This course is designed to give you the basics of media strategy and analysis. Whether you're destined to be a great creative director or create the next big media startup, you will gain valuable insights into how to craft an engaging communications plan.

Media planning as a profession is exciting as you sit at the forefront of social, cultural, and consumer trends. Media is also fun because your clients are well-versed in their own media consumption habits and are very engaged in the expertise that you bring to the table. But most

of all, media is tremendously challenging as everyone thinks they “know” and it’s constantly changing. Media planning is no longer about figuring out how to place the right message at the right time to the right consumer. Media, or Communications Planning, as it is increasingly known, is about creating a dialogue – having a conversation with your consumer.

Unbelievably, you rarely see an ad by accident. This course will take you behind the scenes of how and why to place your message in the various media to create the most effective, engaging communications campaigns. We will explore how and why the definition of media is changing, learn how to understand the changes, and gain valuable tools to get behind the numbers and understand the why behind the what.

We’ll be addressing the world of media in sections:

Section 1: The Media Environment (Ch 1-2)

Section 2: All About Audiences (Ch 3-6)

Section 3: The Media Types (Ch 7-13)

Section 4: Integrated Media Strategies (Ch 14-15)

Texts & Materials



This course uses Media Planning Essentials. The chapters will be accompanied by quizzes that will test your understanding. You may acquire the [text at this link](#).

You will also have access to Stukent Media Planning Simternship™, a simulation model that takes you through the process of creating and implementing a media plan for your client, Buhi.

Learning Outcomes

1. Make sense of the evolution of the new digital landscape and its impact on the new consumer purchase decision journey along with an understanding of how communications planning differs from the traditional view of *media* planning.
2. Apply media theory to the quantification of audiences both through the analysis of traditional reach, frequency, and Gross Rating Points as well as understand how to create meaningful audience definitions to inform programmatic buying tools (DSPs, SSPs, and DMPs).
3. Identify the various media measurement tools and select the appropriate tool to target audience analysis including MRI, Simmons, ComScore, and Nielsen.

4. Explain how the various media touchpoints are bought and sold.
5. Create effective media strategies to efficiently reach a target audience. These strategies are developed by incorporating media theory basics, campaign strategy mandates, and applying assessment tools such as CPM, CPC, CPA, and/or CPE.
6. Apply the above to the development of effective media planning through Student Media Planning Simternship™.

Course Schedule

| Class Number | Section | Topic | Reading | Assignments Due |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Week 1 Jan 20-24 | Section 1: The Media Environment | Introduction/Syllabus Introduction to Media/Communications Planning | Chapter 1: The Art and Science of Media Planning | Chapter 1 Quiz Due Thursday 1/23, 11pm |
| Week 2 Jan 27-31 | Section 1: The Media Environment | How brands communicate with audiences and how they find them The lay of the land: what the business of media advertising looks like | Chapter 2: The Evolution of Communications Planning | Chapter 2 Quiz Due Thursday 1/30 11pm |
| Week 3 Feb 3-7 | Section 2: All About Audiences | How we talk about audiences and uncover insights about them through research and behavior | Chapter 3: Finding the Right People | Chapter 3 Quiz Due Thursday 2/6, 11pm What it's like to be a media professional |
| Week 4 Feb 10-14 | Section 2: All About Audiences | How we measure audiences How we talk about media types Getting what the advertiser pays for Media theories you need to know | Chapter 4: Finding the Right Place | Chapter 4 Quiz Worksheets 1 and 2 Media Planning Simternship Round 1 All Due Thursday 2/13, 11pm |

| Class Number | Section | Topic | Reading | Assignments Due |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | | |
| Week 5 Feb 17-21 | Section 2: All About Audiences | Moments of receptivity: It's all about timing | Chapter 5: Discovering the Right Time | Chapter 5 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 2 Worksheets 3-5 All due Thursday 2/20, 11pm |
| Week 6 Feb 24-28 | Section 2: All About Audiences | The marketing mix and the Consumer Decision Journey | Chapter 6: Media's Role in the Marketing Mix | Chapter 6 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 3 All due Thursday 2/27, 11pm |
| Week 7 Mar 3-7 | Section 2: All About Audiences | Setting objectives | Chapter 7: Measuring What Works Midterm Review | Chapter 7 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 4 All due Thursday 3/6, 11pm |
| Mar 10-14 Spring Break | | | | |
| Week 8 Mar 17-21 | Section 3: The Media Types | Midterm How the internet works | Chapter 8: Data-driven Strategies in a Digital Era | Midterm Tuesday 3/18 Chapter 8 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 5 All due Thursday 3/20, 11pm |
| Week 9 Mar 24-28 | Section 3: The Media Types | Leveraging the power of social media | Chapter 9: Social Media and the Walled Gardens | Chapter 9 Quiz Due Thursday 3/27, 11pm |

| Class Number | Section | Topic | Reading | Assignments Due |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Week 10 Mar 31 - Apr 4 Apr 4 last day to drop with a W | Section 3: The Media Types | The convergence of the video landscape The economics of television | Chapter 10: Video and Streaming Media | Chapter 10 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 6 All due Thursday 4/3, 11pm |
| Week 11 Apr 7-11 | Section 3: The Media Types | The basics of search advertising Display advertising landscape | Chapter 11: Search and Display | Chapter 11 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 7 All due Thursday 4/10, 11pm |
| Week 12 Apr 14-18 | Section 3: The Media Types | Advertising in the audio space What makes mobile different? | Chapter 12: Audio and Podcasting Chapter 13: The Role of Mobile | Chapter 12 Quiz Chapter 13 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 8 All due Thursday 4/17 11pm |
| Week 13 Apr 21-25 | Section 4: Integrated Media Strategies | Award winning media strategies Final presentation Review | Chapter 14: Creating an Integrated Communications Plan | Chapter 14 Quiz Media Planning Simternship Round 9 All due Thursday 4/24, 11pm |
| Week 14 Apr 28-May 2 | Section 4: Integrated Media Strategies | Instilling trust and transparency in advertising Work on presentations | Chapter 15: Data Privacy, Ethics, and Regulation | Chapter 14 Quiz Due Thursday, 5/1, 11pm |
| Week 15 May 5-9 | Section 4: Integrated | Final presentations Final Exam Review | | Chapter 15 Quiz Due Thursday, 5/8 11pm |

| Class Number | Section | Topic | Reading | Assignments Due |
|---|------------------|-------|---------|---|
| Last day of classes Dec 5 Dead Day - Dec 6 | Media Strategies | | | |
| Week 16 May 12-16 Finals Week | | Final | | Final Thursday, May 15, 10:00 am - 12:45 pm |

Grading Policy, Assignments and Exams

The assessment and grading system is intended to reflect student learning and performance.

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Media Planning Simternship™ | 20% | |
| Media Math Worksheets | 5% | OBJ |
| Chapter Quizzes and In Class projects | 20% | |
| Final Project | 20% | |
| Midterm Exam | 15% | |
| Final Exam | 15% | |
| Attendance & Participation | 5% | |

Extra credit: I offer only a few extra credit assignments in this class because we have a lot of assignments as it is. Letter grades will be based on these scores:

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|----------------------|
| 4.0 A = 90 - 100 |
| 3.0 B = 80 - 89 |
| 2.0 C = 70 - 79 |
| 1.0 D = 60 - 69 |
| 0.0 F = 59 and below |

The last day for students to drop a class or completely withdraw with an automatic "W" is **April 4, 2025**. Students who drop after the deadline will receive an F.

If, in the end, you have an issue or complaint with your final grade, [here's the link](#) to submit a formal grade appeal to the Dean of Student Affairs.

Quizzes

Every chapter in the book has an accompanying quiz. The quiz must be completed before class begins on the day the reading assignment is due. The exception is the first week of class, when due dates are later in the week.

Assignments

Stukent Media Planning Simternship™

You will work through the Simternship along with the text. This will give you hands-on experience working with a client and planning and buying media to deliver on the client's goals.

Media Planning Worksheets (link in text).

These worksheets test your knowledge of basic media math concepts. They are created in Google Sheets to give you the opportunity to gain basic knowledge of how to navigate a spreadsheet. The assignment will be turned in as a Google Sheet.

Final Project

Upon completion of the Simternship, you will need to apply the skills you learned in the media chapters to select three of the vehicles you chose in your Simternship to create a unique way to use that vehicle. You will need to research the vehicle and learn about the unique ad formats at your disposal. Armed with that knowledge, recommend how Buhi can create an engaging experience for their target audience.

In a final class presentation, you and your team may share the following, including your thinking that led you to the decisions you made:

1. Target Audience
2. Messaging and Strategy Drivers
3. Budget Allocation
4. Quarterly Buys
5. **Specific unique and creative *media* ideas (be careful, you are not creating ads, you are recommending how Buhi can use the vehicle to stand out in a unique and engaging way)**

Exams

There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Exams will cover material from the textbook and material covered in class.

Copyright Notice

Many of the materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course, and only for the purpose of this course. It is a violation of copyright law for you to use them for purposes other than this class or to share them with anyone not enrolled in this course. In fact, your own work is copyright protected. To share it with future classes, I'll be asking you to sign a work release toward the end of the course. Other classes have done this so that you can see real examples of how this class went in prior semesters. Students have told me this is a huge help. I hope you'll do the same for future classes.

CLASS POLICY:

Attendance and absences:

It's up to you to keep up with reading, videos and quizzes during your absences. I will not recap for you class events other than what is posted in the week's folder in Blackboard and in the

course calendar.

Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by the completion of the following activities:

- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements
- Participating in engaging discussions with your peers
- Other activities as indicated in the weekly modules

If you miss a week of work because of illness, I will need a doctor's note.

If you miss a week of class because of personal travel or another personal event you chose to attend rather than do your class work, that is not excused.

According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of "W" before the course drop deadline and with a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline." See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. If I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24-hour advance notice via email.

If you miss more than two classes – excused or unexcused absences – there is a mandatory one-on-one meeting with me, either during my office hours or virtually. It's your responsibility to set up this meeting, and until you do, I will continue to count you absent.

If you feel that you can't complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registrar's Office](#) to start the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

Make-up Work

Make-up work will be given only in the case of a documented emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

Technology Requirements

Some course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard;

other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop **and ideally bring it with you to class.** You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with the technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Course Communication:

Here are the ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- Office Hours: I will have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours are in-person; however, you can request a virtual meeting, and I will send you a Zoom link. Please see the days and times at the top of this syllabus.
- Email: UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student e-mail account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.
- Announcements: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

Netiquette:

Online communication can be challenging. There's no tone of voice, body language or facial expression to give anyone clues about what you mean. Unclear, hasty writing can also cause misunderstandings. Please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind when you communicate with me and your team. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider your audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas. Politeness extends to small things, too. Use a greeting in your emails, for example. "Hello, team." Rather than launching directly into what you want, such as beginning an email with "Why are we meeting tomorrow?"
- Be always respectful and courteous to your classmates and me. I will not tolerate harassment or inappropriate postings.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what you would comfortably say in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever you post in these online spaces is for classmates and professor

only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

Class Recordings:

I will not be recording each class. It's your responsibility to be in class and on time. In the event you miss a class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, please catch up via the materials in your weekly Blackboard folders and reach out to your team for any other essential information. **I do not give you permission to record during class on your own device, which includes images of me, of slides or of classmates.**

Plagiarism Detecting Software

Some of your course work and assessments may be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

Guidance On Artificial Intelligence

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of an activity, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often "hallucinate" or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use.

That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

Specific advice for our class:

Advertising is about creating ideas, not stealing them. Ideas or writing that is not your own original work are completely unacceptable. Be mindful of copyright laws. Do not lift wording from any sources verbatim. Do not use written source material without crediting it. These are violations of copyright law and a violation of UTEP's scholastic honesty policy that follows:

UNIVERSITY POLICIES and RESOURCES

UTEP's scholastic honesty policy:

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, having unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly

represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

UTEP's Student Resources

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Familiarize yourself with the bookmarks on the right-hand side of the Blackboard student portal (visible before entering a course) as well as the resources below.

If you have a disability:

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) is here to help every student get the most from their class experience. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, it's your responsibility to contact CASS at 747-5148, or by email: cass@utep.edu. You can also visit the office in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For more information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. Only CASS Staff can validate, and if necessary, authorize accommodation for students with disabilities.

Technology Resources

[Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for help. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian help for enrolled students.
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.

Individual Resources

- [Military Student Success Center: Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.](#)
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services: Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services: Provides various counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions and career and disability assessments.](#)

University Guidelines for ADA and student pregnancy and parenting

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodation online via the CASS portal.