

**Boston University School Of Communications  
Los Angeles Campus  
Entertainment Promotion: Speaker Series  
Fall 2015**

Instructor: Ben Laski  
Tel: 310.454.5280  
email: ben@laskico.com

**Course Description**

**COM CM 564E HW: Entertainment Promotion: Speaker Series.** The course will showcase publicists, entrepreneurs, agents, managers, and executives, among others, who will discuss their role and real life experience in developing, marketing, promoting, and guiding entertainment and technology projects (movies, music, startups, plays, books, etc) to success. The course surveys the nuts and bolts of successful strategies in entertainment marketing and promotion with emphasis on doing so in the digital age while assisting students to find their passion and be better positioned in finding a job.

Classes are generally held on Thursday evenings unless otherwise noted.

**Course Schedule**

**September 3:** Introduction to the course and its organization.

**September 10: Business Development.** How to launch and market a new project/company and related business development strategies. **Speaker: Will Marks**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 1-34  
Hanlon, pp 1-41  
Passman, pp 1-7

**September 18: Field trip to a taping of The Soup.**

Please Note: We will meet at 6pm on **Friday** and there will not be a class on Thursday this week.

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 34-67  
Hanlon, pp 41-72  
Passman, pp 11-40

- **About Me 1 assignment due**

**September 24: Creating a Buzz-- Publicity and Public Relations.** The role of the publicist in the tech, film, TV, and music world. Speakers will explore publicity in traditional media outlets and the new expanding online media. **Speakers: Katie Berger and Abby Schiller of PMBC Group**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 68-88  
Hanlon, pp 73-98  
Passman, pp 41-58

**October 1: The Entrepreneur:** What it takes to start and manage your own startup.  
**Speaker: Jeff Jacquin of Phonote**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 89-108  
Hanlon, pp 99-126  
Passman, pp 371-379; 413-425

**October 8: Management.** The role of the manager in procuring writers and actors work in film and TV projects. **Speaker: Matt Fisch of the Arlook Group.**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 136-157  
Hanlon, pp 147-166  
Passman, pp 80-127

**October 15: Advertising and Marketing.** The role of advertising and marketing in promoting a film, TV show, product, or brand. Speakers to explore identifying key demographics, coming up with the ad campaign, and selling the project without selling out. **Speakers: Sharon Hsu and Harry Osborne of TBWA/Chiat Day**

- **Case Study 1 due**

**October 22: Online Marketing and Publicity.** The role of online marketing and publicity in promoting projects in the ever-evolving social media age. Speakers to explore new online advertising and marketing techniques and more traditional brick and mortar techniques.  
**Speaker: Chip Schutzman of Miles High Productions & Amy Treco of M.F.H**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 109-136  
Hanlon, pp 127-145  
Passman, pp 61--79

**October 29: Legal Sea Food-- The Attorney.** The role of the attorney, intellectual property, and the nuts and bolts of negotiating various entertainment industry agreements. **Speaker: Ben Laski**

Reading Assignment:  
Hughes, pp 159-179  
Hanlon, pp 167-189  
Passman, pp 193-238

**November 5: Agents.** The role of the agent in the film and TV world. Speaker will explore how agents connect you with the right people or projects and open the right doors. **Speaker: Eric Garfinkel**

**Note: Class will meet at the Gersh Agency at 6pm.**

Reading, Assignment:  
Hughes pp 180-196  
Hanlon, pp 191-213  
Passman, pp 240-273

**November 12: Special Guest**

**November 19: No Class: BULA Mandatory Event**

**November 26: No Class: Thanksgiving**

**December 3:** Student class presentations.

- **Case Study 2 due**
- **About Me 2 Due**
- **LinkedIn page Due**

### **Course Objectives**

- Students will be able to understand how each element of PR, advertising, legal, etc., adds to the launch of an entertainment or technology project. Professionals in the entertainment and tech industry will provide hands on experience on how to promote, market, and advertise entertainment projects such as feature films, startups, products, TV shows, and musical acts.
- Students will be exposed to professionals in the entertainment and tech industries and learn from their real life experience in their respective fields. Speakers will provide in-depth accounts on their input and contribution to making an entertainment project become successful and what they found not to work.
- Students will be able to connect assigned reading and class lectures and evaluate the various careers available in Hollywood and see how each works independently and as part of a team in garnering success for films, products, startups, TV shows, and musical acts.
- Students will improve their writing and public speaking skills by completing the class written assignments and presenting the final project in front of the class and a possible panel of professional from the entertainment industry.

## Course Assignments and Grading

Grading will be based on class participation and attendance, mid term assignment, and final assignment with the following percentage for each:

Attendance and Participation:	15%
Each About Me	12.5%
Case Study 1	10%
Case Study 2	30%
LinkedIn Page	10%
Class Presentation	10%

Each assignment will be graded for the following:

<b>Style:</b>	
Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling & Syntax	15%
Clarity	10%
Organization (sentences and over all work)	15%
<b>Substance</b>	
Research	20%
Analysis	40%

Prompt arrival and full attendance are mandatory. Anyone who can't make a class should notify me ahead of time. Classes are 3 hours long and are extremely important as class lectures do not repeat assigned reading. You will be examined on diverse material coming from both readings and lectures. If you miss more than 3 classes you will be lowered one full grade (i.e. from B to B-).

Turn in of late assignments are not allowed except in cases of genuine emergency. In such cases, you will have to notify me ahead of time and provide proper documentation.

## Description of Assignments

**About Me 1 & 2 (1-3 pages):** In About Me 1, students will discuss who they are, their background, and personal and professional goals. In About Me 2, they will then highlight and discuss their progression on these matters from where they were in the first few weeks of the class to the last week, emphasizing how the BULA program, internships, and being out in LA facilitated such progress.

**Case Studies:** Students will be assigned to create a social media and PR/ad campaign for a company within a specific budget. **Case Study 1 (1-2 pages)** will be a general overview of the campaign to be approved by the professor. **Case Study 2 (over 5 pages)** will be the actual campaign itself.

**LinkedIn Project:** Students will review other LinkedIn pages and will update their page with the experiences and work they have done during the semester in order to better situate them to get a job.

**Class Presentation (up to 5 minutes)**—students will describe and showcase the campaign they are doing under Case Studies. Use of PowerPoint and any other A/V is encouraged.

**Please Note:**

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Any kind of academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the filing of academic misconduct charges. Any suspicious act/material/etc. will be investigated to the fullest extent possible and those found guilty will be punished accordingly.

BE SURE TO READ AND COMPLY WITH BOSTON UNIVERSITY'S UNIVERSAL ACADEMIC CONDUCT CODE. It is available at: [bu.edu/academics](http://bu.edu/academics)

**Assigned (Required) Reading**

1. Patrick Hanlon, *Primal Branding*
2. Mark Hughes, *Buzz Marketing*
3. Donald Passman, *All You Need To Know About The Music Business*
4. Newsletters  
*The Hollywood Reporter*—daily newsletter (free online)  
*Digitalmediawire.com* (free online)  
*Deadline.com* (free online)  
*Billboard.com*  
*Promaxbda.org*

**Recommended Reading**

- Seth Godin, *Purple Cow*
- Phil Rosenthal, *You're Lucky You're Funny: How Life Becomes a Sitcom*
- Keith Ferrazzi, *Never Eat Lunch Alone*
- Bill Robinson and Ceridwen Morris, *Its All Your Fault: How To Make It As A Hollywood Assistant*
- David Rensin, *The Mailroom: Hollywood History from the Bottom Up*