

**BULA – QST SI / COM FT 438E HW – COURSE OVERVIEW / SYLLABUS
“TALENT REPRESENTATION, STRATEGY & CONTRACTS”**

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Spring Semester 2023 (Wednesdays, 7:30pm) - Office Hours: TBD and at request

Course Overview and Objective

Follow the money. For every movie, sporting event, television show, YouTube video, viral TikTok, Netflix series, hit record, reality show and Influencer sensation, there are key people making the deals. But, the Entertainment Industry is a business based on opinions, educated guessing, politics and making strategic choices. Every project and talent usually has a representative. Being an agent, manager, lawyer, or publicist is not just about marketing and selling a “talent” into projects and potential superstardom but, it includes careful positioning and deal making that can turn an actor into a star, a career into a life, a product into a brand, and a production into a franchise.

Information is power. Participants in this course will get a rare, hands-on opportunity to peer behind the historically closed doors of talent agencies, personal management companies, entertainment law firms and other areas of representation and production. They'll gain a clear view of what Entertainment Representation has to offer as a chosen career, as well as how to deal with representatives when working in other businesses that might intersect with Hollywood.

Utilizing actual case studies from movie, TV, digital and record deals as well as “Hollywood” headlines, class members will learn what representatives do, and examine the manner in which they can work together in an effort to build brands and make superstardom a reality. Participants will gain a working knowledge of these jobs and types of deals, examine negotiation strategies, learn proper business etiquette in a social media world, how to develop instincts and translate their classroom education into being an effective executive in the real world.

Methodology

This course will be taught by Randi Siegel, talent manager/producer/consultant. It will include:

- Lectures, interactive discussions and guest speakers
- Case studies: social media, hot topics, deals made in film, TV, digital and reality programs
- Video and audio presentations of TV shows, films, digital programs, hot topics
- Written exams and verbal presentations
- Discussions on ethics, morals and business etiquette

Pre-requisite:

QST OB 221 “The Dynamics of Leading Organizations” or equivalent

Required Reading

Textbooks:

- 1) **Where Did I Go Right?** (by Bernie Brillstein, David Rensin) ISBN- 0-446-67665-9
Warner Books, 1999
- 2) **The Business of Television** (by Ken Basin) / ISBN-13: 978-0815368663, ISBN-10: 0815368666, Routledge, 2018

Websites: Daily Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, Deadline.com, TMZ.com, etc.
Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
Handouts: Contracts, excerpts from selected publications

Academic Conduct and Plagiarism

Every member of the Boston University community is responsible for becoming familiar with the School's academic conduct policy, as described in the **Academic Conduct Code** booklet. All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism and for understanding that the penalty against students on a Boston University Program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the university or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean."

NB: The instructor of this course believes that you are only as good as your word. It is expected that you approach this class with honor integrity and in a manner that will ultimately be a reflection of what you'll put forth in the business world.

GRADING CRITERIA

Quizzes (2)	15%
Practical assignments*	20%
Participation	10%
Attendance	10%
Verbal Presentations	10%
Final exam	35%

IMPORTANT NOTES

Participation in class is paramount to the learning process. During any given class, there will be discussions of current issues in the news, and the possibility of surprise guest speakers. While it is understood that "public speaking" may not be a strong suit for everyone, credit will be given for progress and making the effort to step beyond one's comfort zone. Improvement counts.

By the end of the course, there should be a clear understanding of how each area of talent representation functions in the scope of Hollywood, how to deal with celebrities and representation, and how to form logical, strategic opinions. There should also be a clear understanding of how to ask the right questions, analyze contracts, develop strategies and navigate negotiations.

**Practical assignments can include research, being assigned to watch shows or content and participate in discussions.*

TALENT REPRESENTATION, STRATEGY & CONTRACTS
COURSE SCHEDULE – QST SI 438 / COM FT 438 – SPRING 2023

CLASS# & DATE	AGENDA	READING
#1 Wednesday 1/25/23	Review the syllabus, class overview / expectations Intro to the Representation Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News headlines – Hot topics • Agents, managers, lawyers, publicists, business managers • TAA (Talent Agencies Act) and laws around representation (case studies: Kelly Clarkson, Lisa Kudrow) • How businesses deal with artist’s representatives <i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – lying, cheating, stealing</i>	Bernie Brillstein Book (this book is a biography and should be completed by the end of the semester) HOMEWORK 1: research on influential people in entertainment (to be assigned in class)
2/1/23	<i>NO CLASS</i>	
#2 2/8/23	Intro to the “Industry”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks and studios, streamers, production companies and the types of deals they make • Unions: SAG-AFTRA, DGA, WGA • Laws that protect Talent: The Krekorian Act, WGA packaging regulations • Types of deals for Branding, live events, film, TV, Influencers <i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – the age of #MeToo</i>	Business of Television: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preamble • Introduction • Chapter 1A, B • Chapter 2A Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts HOMEWORK 1 DUE
#3 2/15/23	You’re a star! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The casting process • Identifying talent, scouting, developing instincts, understanding the difference between working actors, superstars, celebrities and brands • How careers are built (executive and talent) • #CANCEL CULTURE • How to approach talent you’re interested in representing or hiring • <i>Possible Guest Speaker*</i> <i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – credibility, being trustworthy</i>	Business of Television: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7, 8 Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts
#4 2/22/23	1 st half of class: QUIZ #1 The Evolution of Media & Entertainment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reality shows vs. Scripted shows 	Business of Television: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 Deadline.com and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital deals and monetization of socials • How Social Media can make and break careers <p>(GROUP ASSIGNMENTS for Group Presentations on 3/1)</p> <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – overselling and client poaching</i></p>	assigned sites/ handouts
#5 3/1/23	<p>Group Presentations: SIGNING TALENT TO THE ROSTER</p> <p>Your group will identify a talent that you'd like to represent. You'll pitch that talent to the class and discuss the merits of signing and representing that talent. This is a 5-7 minute, verbal presentation and your group grade will be given to each person in the group. This is part of your "Verbal Presentations" grade.</p> <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – strategy vs. manipulation</i></p>	<p>Business of Television:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 <p>Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts</p>
3/8/23	SPRING BREAK	
#6 3/15/23	<p>Contracts and agreements in film, music, television, digital platforms and other distribution channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process of making or getting an offer • Deal Memos and negotiation strategies • Dealbreakers & leverage • How to read, interpret and analyze contracts • Overall deals, first look deals, series deals <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – right for the client, or for you</i></p>	<p>Business of Television:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5, 6, 10 <p>Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts</p>
#7 3/22/23	<p>1st half of class: QUIZ #2</p> <p>2nd half of class: More on contracts & agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing negotiation techniques • Case studies from deals in the headlines • Mock negotiations <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – calling people out on their lies</i></p>	<p>Business of Television:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5, 6, 10 • Glossary <p>Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts</p>
#8 3/29/23	<p>WORKSHOP: Sharpening Interpersonal Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming nerves when making phone calls • Networking at events, panels, etc • Handshaking is back! 	<p>Business of Television:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5, 6, 10 • Glossary <p>Deadline.com and assigned sites/ handouts</p>
#9 4/5/23	<p>Project Choices and Your Role in Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the quality of the deal vs quality of the project • Making decisions on offers based on what's best for a 	

	<p>talent's overall career</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media's influence on deals (Case: Kevin Hart) • Keeping your client from blowing the deal • A good deal doesn't mean it's the right deal • Protecting your client's best interests in the long run • <i>Possible guest speaker*</i> <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion - what's important to you?</i></p>	
#10 4/12/23	<p>Mock negotiations and decision making strategy discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing your own name, network of associates and quality reputation • Negotiation strategies • "Life's too short" syndrome • Trajectory of a talent's career <p><i>Ethics & Morals Discussion – throwing someone under the bus</i></p>	Brillstein Book Chapters 10-15
#11 4/19/23	Review and prep for the final exam, which will be part oral participation and part written	
#12 4/26/23	FINAL EXAM Last day of class	

*Guest speakers can include professionals from representation, business affairs, business management, talent and casting. Due to the uncertain nature of people's schedules, speakers might be booked or canceled at the last minute. If you miss class, you will still be held responsible for information and content that was discussed.

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