

J328 • Magazine Management

Fall Semester 2008 • Tuesday & Thursday 3:30-4:45 p.m.

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Office hours: M-W 2:00-4:00 and T-Th 1:30-3:30 and by appointment

"Walk-in" questions always welcome

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN: This course has three learning objectives: (a) to learn about the production and business side of magazines; (b) to learn how the magazine industry works as a whole; (c) to learn management and leadership principles that will prepare you to work as a magazine editor or publisher.

Specific goals:

By the end of this course, you should know:

- the various types of magazines and diverse audiences among the 19,000 American magazines
- how to analyze magazine advertising revenue and circulation trends using an Excel spreadsheet
- how to conduct research on publishing companies and forecast their future outlook
- how to apply the highest standard of ethical practices in magazine editing and publishing

RESOURCES FOR LEARNING:

Sumner and Rhoades: *Magazines: A Complete Guide to the Industry* and other readings to be assigned.

Magazine Publishers Association Handbook 2008, Available as a free pdf download at www.magazine.org.

HOW YOU WILL LEARN:

1. Research a magazine sector. A 2,000 word research paper (excluding bibliography, tables and graphs) and Powerpoint presentation about a sector of the magazine industry, such as women's magazines, sports, automotive, etc. This paper will analyze and discuss new startups, circulation growth or decline and revenue trends for ten magazines in that segment. It should explain why that sector is growing, declining or remaining stable. The purpose of the paper is to explain why this is or isn't a healthy magazine sector in which to work, launch a new magazine or invest.

2. Research a publishing company. A 2,000 word research paper (excluding bibliography and tables) and Powerpoint presentation about a magazine publishing company. Each student will choose a different company from among the largest magazine companies. The paper should profile the history and growth of the company. Document and explain trends in revenue and circulation growth or decline of its magazines. The purpose of this paper is to explain to others why this is or isn't a healthy company to work for or invest in.



3. Learn leadership principles: At the beginning of most classes, I will discuss a principle of leadership and management. Take notes and keep a record. I will also assign other articles and short readings. These tips will offer advice you can use when you hold a position as the editor or publisher of a magazine or even in volunteer and civic groups. You will be tested on these principles.

4. Attend class. The J328 course will meet twice a week for an hour and 15 minutes each time. I use a variety of lectures, audio-visual and Internet presentations, class discussions, small group discussions, classroom writing assignments and homework assignments. Attendance is essential and you can't fully "make up" or "find out what you missed" any time you are absent. Absences will significantly affect your grade. For each unexcused absence, 10 points will be deducted from your final point total. An unexcused absence occurs when you do not contact me in advance of the class you miss with an legitimate reason.

5. Participate in class. (10 percent). When the class includes class discussion, I will evaluate participation by each student at the end of the class in my gradebook. When I assign a chapter in *Magazines: A Complete Guide to the Industry (or other reading assignment)* I will ask each student at least one question about the chapter the next time in class. Instead of quizzes, that is the primary way I will determine if you read the assignment. BE PREPARED or I will start giving pop quizzes.

EVALUATING YOUR LEARNING:

A. MID-TERM and FINAL EXAMS. (20 percent). The mid-term and final exams will consist of open-ended discussion questions that require you to analyze, synthesize and give examples from the material you have heard in class or read in *Magazines: A Complete Guide to the Industry* or other assigned readings. The best way to prepare for these exams is to avoid waiting until the last minute. Read the assignments on the day they're assigned, underline (or highlight in yellow) the most important and interesting passages, and participate in the class discussion the next class. Then review your notes and highlighted material for the tests.

B. GRADING POLICIES AND CRITERIA:

1. One 2,000-word research paper on a magazine sector – 125 points (100 points for paper; 25 points for presentation)	25%
2. One 2,000-word research paper on magazine publishing company – 125 point (100 points for paper; 25 points for presentation)	25%
3. Attendance, punctuality and participation (10%) – 50 points	10%
4. Written assignments and homework – 100 points	20%
5. Mid-term and final – 100 points	20%
Total: 500 points	100%

Grading scale:

A	96-100%	C	79-82.9%
A-	94-95.9%	C-	76-78.9%
B+	92-93.9%	D+	73-75.9%
B	88-91.9%	D	70-72.9%
B-	85-87.8%	F	69.9-below
C+	83-84.9%		

Project presentations

You are required to use Powerpoint to present your sector research papers and publishing company papers. You may also use visuals from various magazine websites. Use Excel to summarize circulation and revenue data. The rationale is that managers and leaders of organizations must learn how to summarize, communicate and persuade others to accept their ideas. I will spend class time offering how-to advice and practice in using Powerpoint and Excel. The required length for the research paper is 2,000 words of text plus charts, graphs and bibliography.

Field trip

The field trip to Dynamic Resources Group Publishing in Berne, Indiana, on Nov. 11 is required. DRG, Inc. is Indiana's largest magazine publisher. We will leave BSU about 12:30 p.m. and return about 6:00 p.m. If you have a class conflict that prevents your attendance, please discuss with me to receive an alternate assignment.

Punctuality

Lack of punctuality is rude and disrupts the teacher's comments and other students' attention. It has sometimes been a serious problem. I pass around an attendance sheet at the beginning of every class. If you are not here on time to initial it, then you will receive an unexcused absence if you do not have an acceptable reason for being late. If lack of punctuality becomes a serious problem with one or more students, I reserve the right to lock the door and prohibit entry after class starts.

Backups: Keep a backup of every article and assignment on a jump drive or external hard drive. Do not risk losing any assignments or required readings.

Honesty

I always tell the truth. I trust students to always tell me the truth. If you are sick, late or have any reason that affects your attendance or performance, then I will trust what you tell me as true unless I have reason to suspect otherwise. Please do not disappoint me. If anyone abuses my trust, I may ask for proof or documentation of illness, family emergencies, etc.

The Department of Journalism takes academic dishonesty very seriously. You will be asked to sign the journalism department's "Student Academic Ethics Policy." If you violate the department's "Student Academic Ethics Policy," you risk receiving a failing grade on an assignment or for the class overall. You also might jeopardize your good standing with the university, which could include expulsion from the university. As of fall 2007, the Department of Journalism will keep a list of names of students who are caught plagiarizing or fabricating information. For more information, go to Ball State's "Student Academic Ethics Policy" at: www.bsu.edu/sa/article/0,1375,207457-14207-34919,00.html

Professionals-in-Residence attendance

The department chair invites several professional journalists to speak each semester. They offer you a great chance to learn from people who are out there doing what we teach you how to do. They also offer you a great chance to make contacts that can lead to future internships and jobs. That's why I require all students to attend two of these addresses. Failure to attend two will result in a 10-point (each) reduction from your final grade. Attendances are recorded and reported to me by the department. I will ask for oral class reports the next day for students who attend a PIR talk.

- Oct. 9, Tom Traynor, 7:30 pm, AJ175
- Oct. 20, Peggy Stark Adams, 7:30 pm, AJ175
- Oct. 29, Young Alumni Career Panel, 7:30 pm, AJ175s
- Nov. 4, Lesley Tomlin, 7:30 pm, AJ175
- Nov. 17, Hazel Reinhardt, 7:30 pm, AJ175

Questions

I prefer a telephone conversation to an e-mail exchange especially for questions that require a longer answer. Call me first at 285-8210 and leave a message if I am not there. You have permission to call my cellphone at 617-3890 if you need a quick answer. However, please don't use the cellphone number at nights or on weekends. I answer all e-mail and telephone calls from students within 24 hours except on weekends or when out of town.

Diversity statement

The Department of Journalism is committed to creating an awareness of diversity issues as they relate to the society, workplace and classroom. You are encouraged to explore diversity issues in your assignments and class discussions. You may write about groups or issues that are often poorly reported in the mainstream media. Your personal viewpoints will not affect your grade. I always grade solely on specified journalistic and editorial criteria.

Special needs

Please make an appointment with the professor immediately if you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share or if you need special arrangements in case of a building evacuation. If personal problems ever prevent punctual class attendance, I encourage you to talk with me about them. It can only help your grade.

Writing policy

The Department of Journalism regards writing performance and language usage proficiency as essential to the satisfactory completion of all courses. Therefore, department instructors must monitor writing performance and language usage in all courses. Student grades on all course assignments reflect both criteria. That means you are also graded on the quality of writing in the market research reports and the query letter.

Journalism style statement

The AP Stylebook will be followed for all course assignments. You are responsible for owning an AP Stylebook and using correct style, spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the semester.
Professional portfolio

Use of technology in the classroom

If you need to use a recording device or laptop computer during class because of special needs, please make arrangements with the instructor. These devices can be disruptive to students around you and cannot be used during class without permission. It's also important for you to learn to take notes and participate in discussions without the use of electronics. Cell phones also should be disabled during class and stored away.

Best web resources for magazine trends, circulation and revenue data

Audit Bureau of Circulations. www.accessabc.org. (password required). Detailed circulation data.
Advertising Age magazine, www.adage.com. Circulation and revenue data.
Mediamark Research, Inc. www.mriplus.com (free registration required). Magazine demographics.
Magazine Publishers of America, www.magazine.org.
"Mr. Magazine" (Prof. Samir Husni). www.mrmagazine.com. News and analysis of new magazine launches.
International Federation of the Periodical Press. www.fipp.com. International magazine trends & startups.

Look at the advertising "media kit" of any magazine for its demographic and circulation data.

MAGAZINE SECTORS—Choose one of the following:

1. Automotive
2. Boating & Yachting
3. Business & Finance
4. Computers
5. Dogs, Cats & Pets
6. Entertainment and Celebrity
7. Epicurean (food and dining)
8. Fashion, Beauty, Grooming
9. Fishing and Hunting
10. General Editorial
11. Health and Fitness
12. Home Service & Home
13. Horses, Riding, etc.
14. Men's
15. Metro/Regional/City
16. Music
17. Newsweeklies
18. Political and Social Topics
19. Science/Technology
20. Sports
21. Travel
22. Women's

MAGAZINE PUBLISHING COMPANIES—Choose one of the following:

1. Time Inc.
2. Conde Nast Magazines
3. Fairchild Publications
4. Hearst Magazines
5. Meredith Corporation
6. Reader's Digest Association
7. International Data Group
8. McGraw-Hill Companies
9. Rodale Publishing
10. Forbes Inc.
11. American Media Inc.
12. Dennis Publishing Ltd.
13. Reed Business Publications
14. VNU Business Media
15. Crain Communications
16. Ziff Davis Media Inc.
17. Allured Publishing Corporation