Course Description and Objectives:
In this course, we will examine how managers can optimize their communication strategy. Here communications are defined broadly and include traditional advertising (TV, print, and radio) as well as promotions (in-store promotions as well as digital communications and word of mouth campaigns).

The first part of the class focuses on advertising management. We will cover topics such as budget-setting and optimal media planning. We will also discuss the latest developments in advertising research, and how they can be applied to effectively measure and manage the firm’s advertising efforts. Finally, we will cover best practices in the agency-client relationship management.

The second part of the course deals with promotions and consists of three modules. In the consumer promotions module, we will address topics such as in-store promotions, database marketing, and the management of loyalty programs. In the digital communications module, we deal with topics such as behavioral and search engine marketing, as well as online social networks. Finally, we devote few sessions to the management of social interactions, which includes a case, assignment, and recent research findings on how firms can manage word of mouth and other social interactions among consumers.

The class is a mixture of lectures, cases, assignments, and a final project. This class is targeted at students who want to pursue a career in brand management. However, this class will be useful to anyone who plans to do marketing or deal with communications. Assignments will be in the form of readings, exercises, and case preparation.

The broad objectives of this course are to:
• Expose students to marketing theory relevant to the practice of communications management.
• Acquire the tools necessary to tackle decisions such as budget setting, media allocation, dealing (and understanding the workings of) advertising agencies, optimal
communication selection, database marketing, and electronic communication.

- Learn how marketing communications can be used to build brands and how to measure the impact of marketing communications.
- Incorporate technological innovations (such as online social networking sites and blogs) into communication strategy.

**Student Expectations:**
- Students are expected to complete the readings and come to class prepared to participate in discussions.
- Attendance at every class is very important. You are allowed to have a maximum of two absences (the only exception is a documented illness). You do not need to provide reason for the absence.
- Students are expected to contribute equally to the group project.
- Open laptops are not permitted in class.

**Course Prerequisites:**
While there are no formal prerequisites for the class, the course will draw on concepts from introductory marketing and economics. If you don’t have the required background coursework, you may have to work harder to review the supporting material, but this does not preclude you from taking the course.

**Course Web Site:** To be announced.

**Reading Materials:**
We will be using a text packet.
In addition, I recommend doing outside reading. For example, Wall Street Journal, Business Week, AdWeek, Advertising Age and Brand Week all contain materials that are relevant to the class.

**Grading and Course Requirements:**
1. Class Participation and quality of discussion: 25%
2. Mid-term exam: 25%
3. Final exam: 25%
4. Group Project: 25%

In this course, we will cover 4 cases and 2 assignments. You are not required to turn in the assignments or case write-ups. However, our class discussions will be based on the assignments and cases. Consequently, your class participation grade will be based on the quality and consistency of your contribution in these discussions. Since the class participation grade is inherently subjective, it is not subject to re-grade requests.