

# Music Publicity & Promotion

PBRL 4431-001

Fall 2020

Class meeting: Monday 5:30-8:30 p.m.

**Professor Kathryn Hobgood Ray, M.A.**

**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Mobile number:** 901-568-9869

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Catalog description

Examines publicity and promotion of artists and events within the music industry. Focuses on music journalism; advanced writing of collateral material, media relations and pitching, social media marketing and guerrilla marketing techniques. (3.000 Credits)

### Prerequisites

Students must have successfully completed 75 credit hours.

### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Baker, B. (2017). The 9 Irrefutable Laws of Music Marketing. Spotlight Publications.

Other readings will assigned by the instructor.

### Classroom format

This class will be presented in lecture and laboratory formats. (All virtual for Fall 2020 semester.) Students will write and submit assignments that will be returned with feedback meant to encourage student improvement over the course of the semester. Students will also work in virtual groups for one major project and give and receive feedback through peer review.

### Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for PBRL 4431 - 001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

## Course Requirements

### Quality of Work

All work in this course should follow AP Style, including proper spelling, grammar and language. All assignments, unless otherwise indicated, should be typed in 12 pt. font (either Times New Roman or Arial), double-spaced, with margins set to 1" all the way around. Writing assignments will be graded on

conventions, organization, content clarity and creativity. Problems in these or other areas will result in the deduction of points.

There is a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will result in a 0 score for the assignment, with no exceptions. In documenting sources, you may use either APA or MLA formatting.

I am happy to read and offer guidance on drafts of writing assignments, but drafts must be submitted at least 5 days prior to the due date.

### Questions about Grades

If you would like to ask about a grade, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class time, as I will not discuss grades via email or during class. You are responsible for tracking your grade online and meeting with me early in the semester if you are concerned about your overall grade.

### The Secret Guide to Success in this Course

In short, your participation and engagement with the class material will determine how much you will get out of it. My goal is for this class to be fun and engaging, and for you to gain knowledge from your texts, my lectures and your peers. Speak up, ask questions, be open, stretch yourself and be prepared. You will succeed if you approach assignments and discussion with authenticity.

### To be successful in this course you will need:

1. Your textbook
2. Access to The Memphis Flyer and other assigned readings
3. A public Twitter account

### Grading

There are 1,000 possible points in this class. At the end of the semester, your class average will be calculated and fractions will be rounded to the nearest whole number. Letter grades will be determined according to the scale below.

Reading quizzes	10 points/ea for a total of 50 points
Album review	50 points
Artist bio	75 points
Event review	75 points
Case study: Music PR/marketing campaign	150 points
Album release campaign (group)	350 points
Class Participation	200 points
Portfolio	50 points
Total	1,000 points

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A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%

B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%

C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%

D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%

F 0-59.4%

### GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students must complete two additional requirements: peer critique on strategic approaches in album release campaigns submitted by classmates (50 points); and a multi-platform social media mini-campaign (which may be related or unrelated to the artist selected for the album release, 200 points).

A+	1196-1250	B+	1034-1087	C+	872-925	D+	710-763
A	1142-1195	B	980-1033	C	818-871	D	656-709
A-	1088-1141	B-	926-979	C-	764-817	D-	600-655
F	Below 600						

## Other issues

## COURSE SCHEDULE

This is a basic schedule for topics and major assignments over the course of the semester. Although every effort will be made to stick with this schedule, please understand that some material may require more or less discussion and class time. Thus, changes to the schedule may occur. All changes will be announced in class.

*Week 1, August 17: Course introduction + music publicity in music industry 2.0*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: N/A

*Week 2, August 24: Great music writing, pt. I (features and biography)*

Readings: **Ecourseware reading: features and biography**

Assignments: N/A

*Week 3, August 31: Great music writing, pt. II (reviews and criticism)*

Readings: **Ecourseware reading: reviews and criticism**

Assignments: **Find a great bio**

*Week 4, September 7: NO CLASS FOR LABOR DAY*

*Week 5, September 14: Great music writing, pt. III (interviews and essays)*

Readings: **Ecourseware reading: interviews and essays**

Assignments: N/A

*Week 6, September 21: Visual branding: working with designers + photographers*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: **Artist bio due**

*Week 7, September 28: Working with the media: media relations + building press lists + pitching*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: **Deadline to approve paper topics + form groups for album campaign project**

*Week 8, October 5: Websites + EPKs*

Readings: Baker, Laws 1-3

Assignments: Live event reviews due (this will likely be a review of a Facebook live event or some other streaming event due to COVID-19)

*Week 9, October 12: Marketing strategy*

Readings: Baker, Laws 5, 6, 8

Assignments: N/A

*Week 10, October 19: Tactics, pt. I (social media, direct to fan, guerilla marketing)*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: N/A

*Week 11, October 26: Tactics, pt. II (album release campaign)*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: N/A

*Week 12, November 2: Tactics, pt. III (tour publicity + marketing)*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: Case study papers due

*Week 13, November 9: Course review day + album release campaign work session*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: N/A

*Week 14, November 16: Album release campaign presentations*

Readings: N/A

Assignments: Album release campaigns due; portfolio due

## ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

### Five Pillars in PBRL 4431

- *Critical Thinking:* Students will engage in high-level strategic thinking in the development of artist branding, identification of audience profiles, analysis of social media insights and preparation of campaign materials. Students will also read critically and discuss music writing.
- *Media Literacy:* Students increase media literacy through regular reading of regional print and online media, coupled with class discussion and analysis through which students will explore audience profiles and audiences served by different media.
- *Multimedia:* Students will integrate social media platforms into a comprehensive public relations campaign for music promotion, and will also use their personal profiles (e.g.: Twitter handles) in class discussions and assignments.
- *Professionalism:* Students will gain an understanding of media relations with an emphasis on an effective pitch as the first step in developing relationships with key media influencers.
- *Writing:* Students will create a compelling written narrative as the foundation of a public relations campaign. Students will write and learn specific forms for artist biographies, press releases and pitches, including long-form creative writing and succinct journalistic

style.

### Professional values and competencies for PBRL 4431

- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communication
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world

### How professional values and competencies will be met

#### *Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)*

- Explain an artist's brand and narrative and how the two work in concert to drive public relations strategy
- Analyze writing about music and assess critically in terms of cultural and industry context
- Understand strategic marketing concepts including "direct to fan" and how the concepts integrate with a public relations strategy
- Assess strengths and weaknesses of a public relations strategy

#### *Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)*

- Earn a passing score on written assignments, quizzes and case studies
- Write artist biographies, press releases and pitches
- Meaningfully participate in class discussion
- Develop a comprehensive album release campaign to demonstrate a holistic understanding of public relations for the music industry

### How assessment of student learning will be met

#### *Awareness*

- Work as a member of a campaign team to plan a comprehensive marketing and public relations strategy and campaign plan

#### *Understanding*

- Edit and critique own work and the work of others
- Manage timelines/deadlines

### *Application*

- Write critical reviews of live and recorded music, public relations case studies and biographies
- Develop and deliver a pitch, and assess classmate pitches
- Use AP guidelines on written materials

## **JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES**

### **Portfolio requirement**

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or Squarespace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### **Email**

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

## Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

## Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary).

Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

## Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

## Academic integrity

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

### **Online SETEs**

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

### **Deadlines**

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

### **AP Style and grammar**

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

### **Disability and accommodations**

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **Diversity and inclusivity**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

### **Weather policy**

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day’s work.

### **Student support**

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

## COVID-19 protocols for this course

### COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy - Masks and Social Distancing

All students, faculty and staff will wear masks in all public spaces, including our classroom (lab) per the COVID-19 policy. The first time a student enters a classroom without wearing a face covering, the student will be asked to leave the class until they return a covering. Further violations will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability. Students who repeatedly or flagrantly violate these community expectations may be referred for discipline under the Student Code and, if appropriate, immediately removed from campus by the Dean of Students.

### Student Health

Students who are experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or a higher than normal temperature should inform me by email so they can be excused from class and should stay home. Students should contact their health care provider or the Student Health Center at <https://www.memphis.edu/health/>.

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at [deanofstudents@memphis.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu).

### Student Accommodations

If and when we return to class, students seeking to remain remote for health or other serious reasons should discuss their options with me. Students with accessibility issues or with other learning accommodation needs due to a disability should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to submit an official request for course accommodations. Contact DRS at 901.678.2880 or at [drs@memphis.edu](mailto:drs@memphis.edu). (<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/index.php>)

### Student Resources

Students who need additional resources can contact the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.