



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

PADM-GP 4137 EXEC-GP 4137

Communications and Branding for Nonprofits

Fall 2019

Instructor Information

- Farra Trompeter [Please call me Farra]
- Email: farra@nyu.edu | Mobile: 646-265-7941
- Emails and calls will be returned within one business day
- Office hours: 10:00-10:40am before class sessions or by appointment; schedule in advance

Lectures:

- Meeting Times: 10:50am-12:30pm on Saturdays Sept 7, 21, Oct 5, 19, Nov 2, 16, Dec 7
- Location: 194 Mercer Street, Room 308

Course Description

An organization's brand can help it raise money, create change, and recruit participants as it effectively communicates its mission. But a brand is more than just a logo or a memorized elevator pitch, it is the way both internal and external audiences perceive your organization—and shaping this perception is as essential to the success of nonprofit and public organizations as it is to for-profit organizations. And since many nonprofits have limited staff and financial resources available for communications activities, it is even more important that these resources be deployed as strategically as possible. This course will offer an overview of branding and communications concepts, helping students approach communications in a way that builds commitment to their organization's mission, increases trust, creates ambassadors, and strengthens impact. Students will gain a basic familiarity with a variety of branding principles and develop strategic communication recommendations for an organization they are familiar with.

Course and Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Understand how brand can act as the driver to an organization's overall communications strategy.
2. Define positioning and personality for a nonprofit organization and apply these tools to make decisions around an organization's brand and communications channels.
3. Apply best practices for managing communications.
4. Explain the elements of a strategic framework and use it to make better decisions.
5. Produce strategic recommendations to for an organization, movement, or campaign.

Learning Assessment Table

Course Learning Objective Covered	Corresponding Assignment Title
#1	Organization overview worksheet
#1, #2	Brand refinement worksheet
#3	Case study worksheet
#4, #5	Final memo

Course Requirements

- For your projects, you will need to select a nonprofit or public sector organization, movement, or campaign to serve as your case study. You can pick an organization you are already connected to or one that you admire. While you can do the assignments without talking to an actual organization, connecting with a staff person there will make your projects better. If you need help selecting an organization, let me know by our second session.
- We will read selections from the following book: Durham, Sarah. Brandraising. California: Wiley, 2010.
- You will purchase three case studies (\$14.50) via link noted in class 5.
- There are no prerequisites for this course.

Participation and Attendance

Class attendance and preparation are critical. All of us bring different perceptions and ideas to this dialogue about strategic communications. Please prepare for each class by immersing yourself in the assignments, and be ready to provide an open and comfortable atmosphere in which to share comments and participate.

As your instructor, I will happily share my knowledge and experience, but I see myself as a facilitator. Our sessions will be interactive and I expect that you'll be ready to share your insights from the

readings and engage one another in discussion. This course is for the student who wants to engage with the material and each other. Class participation is important and will count toward your overall grade. **If speaking in public is difficult for you, please let me know early on.**

Since we are only meeting for seven sessions, you are required to attend every class and arrive on time. If you are not able to attend a class:

- Notify me beforehand via email.
- If there is an assignment due on a date you are absent from class, it is still due at the beginning of class unless you are granted an extension. Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency, out of respect for those who abide by deadlines despite hectic schedules. Late submissions without prior permission will be penalized by a letter grade per day (e.g. B+ to B).
- If you'd like to maintain a high participation grade, you are welcome to submit an optional reflection paper on one of the readings due for the class you miss before the next time we meet two weeks later.
- Please review the slides and resources I post after class and ask me or a fellow classmate any questions about the material we cover.

Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

1. Class attendance and participation: 15%
2. Worksheets: 50%
 - a. Organization overview: 10%
 - b. Brand refinement worksheet: 20%
 - c. Case study answers worksheet: 20%
3. Final memo: 35%

I will also grade you in accordance to [Wagner's grading guidelines, available for your review here.](#)

Grading Rubric

I will evaluate your work on the quality of your insights and your ability to demonstrate that you have processed the readings and reflected on our class discussions. I expect your projects to be organized and thoughtful. Your projects should be well written and reflect professional quality in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and clarity.

Worksheets

- 5: Excellent: sets an example for others to follow
- 4: Very Good: clearly understands concepts
- 3: Good: basic grasp of concepts
- 2: Marginal: missing some of the concepts
- 1: Unacceptable/poor: doesn't understand most or all of the concepts
- 0: Not submitted

Final memo

- **WRITING (25%):** The writing is fluid; sentences/paragraphs are well structured; proper grammar; shows command of graduate level vocabulary and understanding of concepts; polished, not drafty.
- **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION (10%):** Correct spelling/no typos; length limits honored (if given); timeliness and other instructions followed.
- **ANALYTICAL THINKING (25%):** Uses material from class to develop and support ideas; demonstrates effort to integrate materials; paper has a logical flow that presents and develops a clear, unified position/argument; argument is consistent (no contradictions or gaps) and based on critical thinking.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS (30%):** Reflects realities of nonprofit organization's resources, mission, and community; applies insights to a practical discussion of strategic communications.
- **REFERENCES (10%):** Uses and cites references appropriately. You can use ANY reference system of your choice, as long as you are consistent.

Participation

I will use this rubric when calculating your participation grade:

- 14-15%: "A" Level Participation
 - Attends all classes. If late, sends email to professor ahead of time.
 - Frequently contributes to class conversation (roughly once or twice per class). Note: offering input does not mean you will always be called upon.
 - Comments are clear, succinct, and relevant to the current conversation.
 - Is prepared for class, as evidenced by: providing substantive responses; applying ideas from the readings to the discussion; challenging or extending ideas in the readings; and integrating or contrasting ideas from current readings with previous readings
- 12-13%: "B" Level Participation
 - Misses one class. May not send email to professor ahead of time.
 - Rarely contributes to class conversation.
 - Comments are sometimes unclear, long-winded, or not relevant to discussion.
 - Is less prepared for class (see above).
- 10-11%: "C" Level Participation
 - Misses two classes. Doesn't email professor ahead of time.
 - Arrives late more than once.
 - Rarely contributes to class conversation.
 - Is unprepared for class (see above).

Incompletes

The Wagner School has a strict policy regarding incompletes. The grade of "Incomplete Pass" will only be available in extreme circumstances such as serious medical emergencies. Students may withdraw from the course up until the date set by the Registrar. Students who withdraw will receive a grade of W and will have to pay for the course again when they retake it. [You can view the Wagner Incomplete Policy here.](#)

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with assignments or course meeting dates to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

NYU Classes

The course website can be found on [NYU's Classes](#) system, accessible via the Academics tab on NYU Home. Throughout the semester, I will post documents such as lecture slides and supplemental resources. In addition, I will occasionally send emails about course details, including possible guest speakers and logistics, to your NYU email account. *Please check both the course website and your NYU email account on a regular basis.*

Helpful resource

[A bilingual \(Spanish/English\) brandraising glossary](#) by Gil Mejia (2019)

Course Schedule

1. Session 1: September 7

Topic:

Understanding strategic communication and defining Brandraising

Required Reading:

- Brandraising, chapters 1-3
- ["From the Expert: Developing Your SWOT Analysis"](#) by Susan Burnash (2011)

- [Why Most SWOT Analyses Stink and How You Can Make SWOT Work for You](#) by Lincoln Arneal (2016) [“Are you underestimating the power of communications?”](#) by Elizabeth Ricca (2017)
- [“The Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector”](#) by Nathalie Kylander & Christopher Stone (2012)
- [“Building a brand for social change”](#) by Ally Dommu (2018)
- [“Marketing and communications: What’s the difference?”](#) by Melanie Taplett (2018)

Assignment:

Submit organization overview worksheet. **Due 9am on Saturday, September 14.**

2. Session 2: September 21

Topic:

Setting goals and engaging audiences

Required Reading:

- [Achieve more: Putting strategy to work for your nonprofit](#) (ebook), Big Duck (2018)
- [“Nonprofit Communications Strategy: Outlining the context, goals and objectives”](#) by James Howe (2013)
- [“Encourage inclusion and equity at your organization with SMARTIE goals”](#) by NTEN/The Management Center (2018)
- [“Nice to meet you, audience.”](#) by Elizabeth Ricca (2012)
- [“How Make-A-Wish is Telling New Stories with Audience Personas”](#) by See3 (2018)
- [“5 Ways To Use Your Audience Persona To Tell A Better Story”](#) by Vanessa Chase
- Podcast: [“What is strategy?”](#) with Sarah Durham, Laura Fisher, and Gil Mejia (2019)

Assignment:

Complete the worksheet “Audience Profile” for one audience using your selected organization and bring it to class to discuss. **Due 10:45am on Saturday, September 21.**

3. Session 3: October 5

Topic:

Brand strategy and identity – what are we communicating?

Required Reading:

- Brandraising, chapters 4-5
- [“How Great Leaders Inspire Action”](#) (TED talk) by Simon Sinek (2009)
- [“Positioning: Why you should define your nonprofit’s big idea”](#) by Dan Gunderman (2014)
- [“The Power of Brand Personality for Your Nonprofit”](#) by Farra Trompeter (2017)
- [“Using your brand strategy every day in everything”](#) by Sarah Durham (2017)
- [“Inclusive branding”](#) by Chris Tuttle (2019)
- [“The Eight-Word Mission Statement”](#) by Kevin Starr (2012)
- [“An Emotional Connection Matters More than Customer Satisfaction”](#) by Alan Zorfas and Daniel Leemon (2016)
- [“The color of your brand”](#) by Sandy Zimmerman (2018)

Optional Reading/Viewing/Listening:

- [“Getting your new name right: ensuring a successful organizational renaming process”](#) by Farra Trompeter (2018)
- [“How this nonprofit’s reimagined brand helps it serve its mission”](#) by Adele Peters (2018)
- [“The language of values”](#) by Dan Gunderman (2016)
- [“The case for a boring elevator pitch”](#) by Dan Gunderman (2019)
- Webinars
 - [Name change with case studies](#) (2019)
 - [Mission statements and messaging](#) (2019)
 - [Brand personality with case study](#) (2017)
- Podcasts
 - [“How are organizational values and personality different?”](#) with Sarah Durham and Farra Trompeter (2018)
 - [“What makes a great nonprofit tagline?”](#) with Sarah Durham and Dan Gunderman (2018)
 - [“Does your nonprofit need a new logo?”](#) with Sarah Durham and Claire Taylor Hansen (2019)
 - [“Should you rename your nonprofit?”](#) with Sarah Durham, Dan Gunderman, and Farra Trompeter (2019)

Assignment:

Develop the positioning and personality for your selected organization and bring it to class to discuss.
Due 10:45am on Saturday, October 5.

Scheduled guest speaker:

[Chris Tuttle](#), Founder & Principal, TuttleCo (former Director of Communications, GLSEN)

4. Session 4: October 19

Topic:

Brand experience and brand architecture

Required Reading:

- Brandraising, chapters 6-7
- [“Six steps to ensure your rebranding sticks”](#) by Sarah Durham (2014)
- [“Rebuild before repainting: What’s really holding your communications back?”](#) by Elizabeth Ricca (2014)
- [“Does your brand have a shelf-life?”](#) by Sarah Durham (2019)
- [“Brand architecture: Strategies to strengthen your nonprofit’s family of programs, events, and initiatives”](#) (ebook) by Big Duck (2017)
- [“Why bad brand architecture happens to good organizations”](#) by Ally Dommu (2016)
- [“When you know you’ve got a brand architecture problem: an exercise”](#) by Claire Taylor Hansen (2018)

Optional Reading/Viewing/Listening:

- “[How to take credit when it’s not that simple](#)” by Dan Gunderman (2018)
- “[Don’t make it harder to get the attention you deserve](#)” by Elizabeth Ricca (2016)
- “[Brand stickiness: Building, integrating, and managing your nonprofit’s voice so it succeeds](#)” ebook by Ally Dommu and Hannah Thomas (2018)
- Webinar: [Brand architecture](#) (2016)
- Podcast: “[How can you get your new brand to stick?](#)” with Ally Dommu and Sarah Durham (2018)

Assignment:

Submit brand refinement worksheet for your selected organization. **Due 10:45am on Saturday, October 19.**

You should also review the brand experience/architecture of the organization you are studying and come to class ready to discuss it. Please also review the expression of the brand of [Students for Education Reform](#) as we will discuss their brand strategy and direction of brand identity changes (visual and messaging) in class.

Scheduled guest speaker:

[Mohan Sivaloganathan](#), CEO, Students for Education Reform

5. Session 5: November 2

Topic:

Making real-life brand and communications decisions

Required Reading:

Please read both case studies and then submit answers to a set of questions for one of them. You can purchase the case studies at [the Harvard Business Publishing site](#) and [the Yale School of Management site](#).

- “Social Media and the Planned Parenthood/ Susan G. Komen for the Cure Controversy” by Laura Winig, Archon Fung (2012)
- “Marketing New York City” by V. Kasturi Rangan, Anita Elberse (2008)
- “The Public Theater” by Steven C. Koernig (2015)

Optional Reading/Viewing/Listening:

- “[For economic and racial justice: A rebrand story](#)” by Ambar Mentor-Truppa (2019)
- “[Engaging staff for a successful rebrand that lasts](#)” by Katherine Ollenburger and Karla McLean (2019)

Assignment:

Submit the case study worksheet for one of the cases and come to class ready to discuss all of the case studies. **Due 10:45am on Saturday, November 2.**

Scheduled guest speaker:

[Tom McCann](#), Senior Director, Marketing and Communications, The Public Theater

6. Session 6: November 16

Topic:

Using campaigns and social media to attract supporters

Required Reading:

- [“The difference between your nonprofit’s brand and its campaigns”](#) by Sarah Durham and Lila Tublin (2017)
- [“The Power of Simple”](#) by Lisa Benenson (2016)
- [“A Chorus for Wildlife: How World Wildlife Fund helped organize a global clarion call to stop wildlife crime.”](#) by Carter Roberts & Steve Ertel (2016)
- [“Weaving campaigns into your bigger story”](#) by Will Nolan (2018)
- [“Nonprofit Marketing: Challenges, Strategies and Best Practices”](#) by David Gorodetski (2018)

Optional Reading:

- [“Stop Raising Awareness Already”](#) by Ann Christiano and Annie Neimand (2017)
- [“The real reason your organization isn’t well-known”](#) by Sarah Durham (2017)
- [“5 Best Nonprofit Social Media Campaigns”](#) by Nick Rogers (2018)
- [“The State of Social Media in Government in 2018”](#) by Hootsuite (2018)
- [“A Strategic Guide to Social Media for Nonprofits”](#) by Alicia Johnston (2017)

Assignment:

[Review the website](#), sign the pledge, analyze the messaging and engagement, review social media channels of WWF (see footer), and come to class ready to discuss it.

7. Session 7: December 7

Topic:

Internal communications, strong teams, and developing plans

Required Reading:

- [“The Back-of-the-Envelope Guide to Communications Strategy”](#) by Ann Christiano and Annie Neimand (2017)
- [“Internal communications: elements to include in your nonprofit’s plan”](#) by Meg Shannon (2016)
- [“DARCI framework”](#) by Robert Gass (2013)
- [“MOCHA model”](#) by The Management Center
- [“4 steps to more powerful communications”](#) by Elizabeth Ricca (2017)
- [“Creating an Effective Communications Plan for Your Nonprofit Organization”](#) by Linda Gerhardt (2017)
- [“4 Steps to Strategic Communications”](#) by Maura F. Farrell (2018)

Optional reading:

- [“Four Steps Every Nonprofit Should Take Before Creating Its Strategic Communications Plan”](#) by Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (2016)

- [“What Goes Into A Nonprofit Marketing And Communications Plan Or Strategy?”](#) by Kivi Leroux-Miller (2019)
- [“What can the right communications staff really do for your nonprofit?”](#) by Sarah Durham (2017)
- [“7 Signs Your Communications Strategy Isn’t Strategic”](#) by Kivi Leroux Miller (2017)
- [“18 Internal Communications Best Practices for 2019”](#) by Colin Bovet (2019)
- Podcasts
 - [“How can you facilitate better internal communications?”](#) by Sarah Durham and Wayne Ho (2019)
 - [“How do you structure a growing communications team?”](#) by Sarah Durham and Suzanne Shaw (2019)

Assignment:

Submit 4-5 page memo proposing the strategic framework and communications recommendations for your selected organization. **Due 9am on Saturday, December 14.**