Magazine Publishing

MCOM 458-101  
Spring 2018  
207 Van Bokkelen Hall   
Wednesday 6:30-9:10

INSTRUCTOR  
Thom Lieb  
Professor  
[**Mass Communication and  
Communication Studies**](http://www.towson.edu/mccs/)  
Towson University   
Office hours: M/W 12:30-2; other times by appt.

Welcome to Magazine Publishing. This course is an introduction to professional magazine planning and production and to the world of entrepreneurship. Through a combination of readings, lectures, presentations, discussions and guest speakers, we will explore all aspects of the magazine publishing process, from conceiving an idea to writing a business plan to coming up with an editorial schedule. In addition, we will cover design, production, advertising and marketing, circulation and digital strategies.

The objectives of this course are:

1. To acquaint students with the magazine industry, past and present.
2. To give students understanding of all aspects of magazine development through the creation of a comprehensive magazine prospectus and prototype.

All students should have completed MCOM356 prior to taking this course.

**Classroom Etiquette**

During lectures, presentations and group work, students should be focusing on the material being presented and not checking Facebook, email or text messaging.

Please turn off your cell phone at the start of class and drop it off on the desk in the front of the room. If you have a need to keep your phone on a particular evening, please alert me to it and set your phone on silent.

Failure to comply with the phone policy will result in the following penalties: The first time your phone rings in class, you will lose 5 points from your overall class total of 100 possible points, the second time you will lose 10 points, and the third time you will lose 20 points.

Attendance is mandatory. In the event of absence from class, you assume full responsibility for the material covered in class. Please consult with a classmate to see what you have missed. One absence will be allowed; subsequent absences will each result in a deduction of two points from your semester grade. If you have a valid excuse with a note (doctor's note, religious holiday, etc.) the absence will be excused up to my discretion.

**Late assignments will not be accepted**. All assignments are due on the date given in the schedule -- NO EXCUSES!

***Disability Statement***

*This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), 7720 York Road Suite 232, 410.704.2638 (Voice or TDD). Students who suspect they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.*

***Disruptive Behavior***

*When students' behaviors become disruptive to class, faculty have the authority to remove students from class. Students will not be allowed to make up the rest of that semester's coursework. If the incident occurs before the final withdrawal period, students must withdraw themselves. If the withdrawal period has expired, students will receive either an FX or the earned grade. Depending on the nature and level of disruptive behaviors, the faculty may report students to Student Affairs Office or Judicial Affairs. The faculty may also call the University Police immediately if there are threats of imminent physical injury or danger to the faculty or to other students in class.*

***Student Legal Responsibilities***

*In all assignments, students must comply with all laws and the legal rights of others (e.g., copyright, obscenity, privacy and defamation) and with all Towson University policies (e.g., academic dishonesty). Towson University is not liable or responsible for the content of any student assignments, regardless of where they are posted.*

***Student Athletes:*** *Within the first two weeks of class, you must have a letter from the coach explaining your place on the team and a schedule of any away games or competitions during the semester. You must take any tests and prepare any assignments that conflict with this schedule before the test or due date, not after.*

## Course Schedule

Note: Course schedule is subject to (and probably will) change.

**January 31**  
> Course overview  
> [**New Magazine Startup Guide**](http://www.magazinepublisher.com/startup.html)  
> [**What is a magazine?**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/www.foliomag.com/pop-magazine-rethinks-definition-magazine-media/)  
> A brief history of magazines  
> Types of magazines  
> [**Top U.S. Consumer Magazines**](http://www.spyglassintel.com/visualization-of-circulation-revenue-for-the-top-12-us-consumer-magazine-publishers/)  
> [**Magazine terminology**](http://www.magforum.com/glossarya.htm)  
> The anatomy of a magazine  
> [**The Matter of Time**](http://nymag.com/news/features/time-inc-magazines-2014-8/)

>[**Media Life Magazine coverage of the magazine industry (archive)**](http://www.medialifemagazine.com/category/magazines/)

**February 7**  
**DUE: Read Hogarth Chapters 4, 6; Kobak sections 5, 6, 11, 15-17; post blog links**[**online**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R9ZGtye8z2rAzRXc38_VkPPhqThCIKPYpi9H4MkSbdE/edit?usp=sharing)

Print vs. digital magazines; building a brand

[**> Print Magazines Are NOT Going the Way Vinyl Went**](https://mrmagazine.wordpress.com/2013/01/28/print-magazines-are-not-going-the-way-vinyl-went-and-thats-why/)  
[**> Yoga Digest: A launch story**](https://mrmagazine.wordpress.com/2015/02/02/yoga-digest-magazine-a-launch-story-the-lifestyle-of-yoga-comes-to-life-in-print-the-mr-magazine-interview-with-co-founder-cody-groth/)  
[**> The Story of the Latest Travel Magazine Launch**](https://mrmagazine.wordpress.com/2015/01/30/this-pineapple-is-to-have-hold-and-enjoy-the-story-of-the-latest-travel-magazine-launch-the-mr-magazine-interview-with-publisher-christopher-lukezic/)   
[**> Creating and Running a Profitable Online Magazine, Part I**](http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/creating-and-running-a-profitable-online-magazine-part-i/) and [**Part II**](http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/creating-and-running-a-profitable-online-magazine-part-ii/)

**February 14**  
**DUE: Magazine Analysis #1; Read**[**this article on AARP the Magazine**](https://mrmagazine.wordpress.com/2016/01/19/aarp-the-magazine-americas-largest-consumer-magazine-fighting-the-good-fight-to-disrupt-the-idea-of-aging-in-america-the-mr-magazine-interview-with-bob-love-ed/)**; Read Hogarth Chapters 1-3; Kobak 18, 19, 27; Questions for guest speaker**

Magazine Launch Plan: Editorial

Developing an idea; the importance of niche

Guest speaker: [**Meg Guroff**](http://advanced.jhu.edu/about-us/faculty/margaret-guroff/), Features Editor, [**AARP The Magazine**](http://www.aarp.org/magazine/) ([**media kit**](http://advertise.aarp.org/media_properties/publications/))

**February 21**  
**DUE: Preliminary pitches (5 minutes each)**

Group work

**February 28**  
**DUE: Magazine Analysis #2;**

**DUE: Questions for guest speaker**; **Kobak 26, 28, 29, 50, 51**

Magazine Launch Plan: The business plan

Guest speaker: Jonathan Oleisky, President, **[Kalix Communications](http://kalixcommunications.com/)**

**March 7**

**DUE: Personal job descriptions and task lists; Read Hogarth Chapter 8**

Crafting a mission statement; Staffing; Planning editorial content; Recruiting writers and editors

**March 14**  
**DUE: Personal job descriptions and task lists; Questions for guest speaker**

Magazine Launch Plan: Circulation/Marketing

Magazine Launch Plan: Events

[**Circulation marketing strategies evolve**](http://www.dmnews.com/circulation-marketing-strategies-evolve/article/175579/)

[**How Magazines Hit the Crowdfunding Jackpot on Kickstarter**](http://mediashift.org/2016/03/how-magazines-hit-the-crowdfunding-jackpot-on-kickstarter/)

Guest speaker: Katie Arcieri Perschy, [**Washington Business Journal**](https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/)

**March 28**

**DUE:** **Kobak 34-39; Questions for guest speaker**

Magazine Launch Plan: Advertising

Guest speaker: John Stefancik, Publisher, [**Chesapeake Bay Magazine**](http://www.chesapeakeboating.net/)

**April 4**

**DUE: Magazine Analysis #3; Read Hogarth Chapter 5; Kobak 20-25; 40-48; 59-65; Questions for guest speakers**

Magazine Launch Plan: Design

[**Magazine layout terminology**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/magazine_layout.pdf)

Guest speakers: Matt DaSilva, Editor-in-Chief, and Gabriella O’Brien, Art Director, [**Lacrosse magazine**](http://www.laxmagazine.com/)

**April 9**

Last day to withdraw from class

**April 11**

**DUE: Questions for guest speakers; Read**[**this article on Garden and Gun magazine**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/How-Garden-Gun-Magazine-Defies-Industry-Slump-WSJ.pdf)

Magazine Launch Plan: Digital strategy

Guest speaker: Ryan Reed, Associate Digital Media Editor, Scripps Howard (formerly of [**Smithsonian magazine**](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/ist/?next=/) and [**Garden and Gun**](http://gardenandgun.com/) )

**April 18**

**DUE: Read Hogarth Chapter 11**

Magazine Launch Plan: Media kits

**April 25**

Careers in the magazine field

Guest speakers:

Erika Huber, Editorial Fellow, [**Washingtonian magazine**](https://www.washingtonian.com/).

Krissy Elliott, [**California magazine**](https://alumni.berkeley.edu/california-magazine).

Nicole Gould, [**What's Up Magazine**](http://www.whatsupmag.com/%22)

**May 2**

**DUE: First draft of Magazine Launch Plan;** **Questions for guest speaker**

Pitch rehearsal

**May 9**  
**DUE: Final draft of Magazine Launch Plan**

Final pitch to judges [**(Judging sheet)**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/magazine-launch-plan-judging-sheet1.docx)

**May 16**  
**1- to 2-page report on your personal contributions to the group (due by 7:30 p.m. via email)**

## Assignments

Your grade will be based on a 100-point grading scale. No credit will be given for late assignments or assignments that do not meet minimum requirements.

**Magazine analyses (3): 10% each**

You will need to complete three analyses of different magazines during the first half of the semester. Each analysis focuses on a different type of magazine:

1. [**Award-winning consumer magazines**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g_xW0sayztKEtiQTH0Wc1spSjzddbIadvf2fMrQZdvA/edit?usp=sharing)
2. [**Online-only magazines**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SBqJ9L-CrrwRx504jUfx-ignql_QvfEoJFvOmMJg2vY/edit?usp=sharing)
3. [**Organization magazines**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wIgyvbH2maVRLOfYi6K950hNV4NKzQZTIbSlOkHzRt4/edit?usp=sharing)

For each, you will need to examine at least one current copy of the magazine, evaluate it and do some additional research. You will then need to write up your analysis (600-750 words each) and post it to a personal blog under the category **mcom359**. Details for each analysis can be found in the links above.

**Initial Pitch: 10%**

Each student will come up with his or her own magazine idea early in the semester. The best ideas will be selected and groups formed around those ideas. Students must submit an **Action Plan** on the night of the initial pitch. You can find a simple model for your Action Plan on pages 14-15 of **Hogarth**. Please make enough copies for all members of the class and the instructor.

**Magazine Proposal: 40%**

This is the heart of the course. All semester, your team will be working to create a **detailed proposal for a new magazine**. LivePlan will help you create this. If you choose not to use LivePlan, you can use [**this model for your proposal**](http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/business-plans/Business-Plans-Volume-01/Magazine-Publisher.html).

Half of this grade is based on your work and half on your team's work. The winning team will get a 2 point (10 percent) bonus on the team score.

Your team is responsible for covering the following positions. Some of these roles may be combined and some responsibilities may be shared or divvied up differently.

1. **Publisher/business manager:** pulls entire package together, leads the budget and business operations, researches costs of production, staff, etc. **Product:** Business plan, including budget and 5-year forecast
2. **Editor in chief:** directs editorial concept **Product:** Mission statement, description of departments, themes, story budget for first three issues
3. **Advertising sales director:** develops advertising program, including list of target advertisers**Product:**Media kit
4. **Art director:**directs design of magazine and related products (website, media kit, digital products) **Product:**three covers, prototype
5. **Digital editor:**Oversees the digital approach, including use of multimedia, social media, decisions about how much content goes on the website, mobile and tablet products **Product:**Website (or other digital products)
6. **Circulation/marketing manager (one or two positions):** Develops a circulation plan, including strategies for single-copy, subscription and/or controlled circulation; develops marketing/promotions plan for the magazine, including events, contests, partnerships, other marketing strategies **Product:** Subscription direct mailer and/or press release announcing the launch of the magazine and/or calendar of events

The proposal includes several sections:

* **A business plan**, including an operations budget and a five-year financial forecast. Your business plan should also include an executive summary, market analysis and company summary. In addition, you may identify potential investors or members of a dream advisory board. (Business manager and publisher will take primary responsibilities for this)
* **An editorial plan** that includes a mission statement; a description of departments; and a table of contents for three issues, listing headlines and blurbs for stories. You may decide to include actual stories you’ve written, photos, infographics, etc. You may also have a letter from the editor, other editorial material. (Editor-in-chief)
* **A design plan** that includes 3 covers and a 16-page prototype (11 pages editorial, 5 advertising) that shows what the magazine will look like. (Art director)
* **A media kit**that includes an advertising rate card and audience profile and a list of target advertisers. (Advertising director)
* **A circulation and marketing plan**that includes a subscription direct mailer (a letter or postcard) and strategies for single-copy, subscription and/or controlled circulation as well as Ideas for promotion and marketing, such as potential events, partnerships, contests, etc. (Circulation/marketing director)
* **A digital strategy**that includes the approach you plan to take with your Web site – paid content or free, web-exclusive content, digital-first, digital-only - mobile and tablet products, etc. This should include details about what features they would include (contests, forums, chats, blogs, etc.) In addition, you will need to create either a small website (consisting of at least a homepage and two article/column pages) or a site made with **[Joomag](http://www.joomag.com/)**. (Digital editor)

Each student must also write a **1- to 2-page report** on your personal contributions to the group, detailing what you brought to the project, how your group worked together and what you got out of this assignment (please be honest in this account). In addition, each student should submit a portfolio of your personal contributions to the project. This may include:

* Research reports you've collected or compiled for your group
* Correspondence with magazine professionals
* Sketches, sample covers or layouts
* Your notes or proposals to the group

In addition, each group will need to prepare a **15- to 20-minute pitch** for judges.

**Questions for speakers: 10%**

Most weeks, we will have a guest speaker for part of our class meetings. This is your chance to learn from a wide range of professionals, in the process improving your odds of creating a successful proposal. Therefore, it is important that you come prepared to ask questions about the topics they are discussing. In addition to having read the relevant material in the text beforehand, you will also need to prepare a printed (**not handwritten**) list of at least five questions for each speaker and ASK at least one of them. At the end of each class, be sure to submit your list to me, with a check next to all the questions you asked. For each speaker, you will receive a maximum of 1.5 points, up to the maximum of 10.

**Participation: 10%**

Your attendance in this class will affect your grade in two important ways. First, your attendance will directly affect your grade if you miss more than one class (see below for details). Second, a major portion of the grade in this course is the group magazine project. Your absences can hurt your group’s project, therefore affecting other students’ grades, which is unacceptable.

The roll will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you arrive at the class significantly late (20 minutes or more), leave class early, or have to be asked to leave class (disruptive behavior or sleeping), it will be counted as an absence. One absence – for any reason – is allowed without affecting your final grade. Each absence after that will lower your final grade by 5 points unless there is a written notification by a doctor or university official.

You should use the “allowed absence” to cover all personal emergency situations, including common illness that requires rest at home or visit to a health clinic, death in the family, car problems, taking care of family or friends, etc. There are no additional “excused absences.” Exception may be made only in a case of a true medical emergency that requires extended hospitalization. However, you will be advised to seek a medical withdrawal from the course if you have to miss three or more weeks of classes.

Observance of religious holidays, recognized by the University of Maryland System, are not considered absences under this policy. Also, if you miss class for “participation in university activities at the request of university authorities (athletics, forensics, etc.),” it will not be considered an absence if you submit a letter from the coach/university official/professor explaining your place on the team/activity and a schedule of any away games or events during the semester. This letter must be submitted by the second week of the current semester. You must prepare any assignments that conflict with this schedule before the test or due date, not after.

When you miss a class, it is your responsibility to cover all the information given during the class as soon as possible from someone in the class. This includes lecture notes, assignments, schedule changes, etc. It is a good idea for you to find someone for exchange of information for a missed class.

## Books and Supplies

There are two required texts for this class. Your success will depend in large part on how well you keep up with reading assignments:

* “How to Launch a Magazine in This Digital Age,” Mary Hogarth. Available at [**Amazon**](http://www.amazon.com/How-Launch-Magazine-This-Digital/dp/144117799X/ref=tmm_pap_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1421169038&sr=8-1-fkmr1) in hardcover, paper and Kindle editions.
* "How to Start a Magazine and Publish It Profitably," James B. Kobak (available from [**Amazon)**](http://www.amazon.com/How-Start-Magazine-Publish-Profitably/dp/0871319276/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1).

In addition, each group should have at least one copy of “Designing the Editorial Experience,” Sue Apfelbaum and Juliette Cezzar (available from [**Amazon**](http://www.amazon.com/Designing-Editorial-Experience-Primer-Mobile/dp/1592538959/))

It is highly recommended you get free [**Trello**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/www.trello.com) account for your group.

It is highly recommended each group purchase at least two months access to **[LivePlan](http://www.liveplan.com/)** (at $19.95 a month) for developing your business plan.

You will also need to purchase a few magazines for the Analysis assignments.

Highly recommended if you have a tablet is a subscription to [**Next Issue.**](http://www.nextissue.com/)

In addition you should read about the magazine business in key trade and consumer publications and websites such as [**Folio**](http://www.foliomag.com/), [**The New York Times**](http://www.nytimes.com/) (particularly Monday's business section, which has a particular emphasis on media, including the magazine industry), [**Advertising Age**](http://adage.com/), [**Columbia Journalism Review**](http://www.cjr.org/), [**Wooden Horse Publishing Magazine News,**](http://adage.com/)[**mrmagazine.com,**](http://www.mrmagazine.com/) [**ASME**](http://www.magazine.org/asme/) and [**Media Life Magazine**](http://www.medialifemagazine.com/).

## Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

1) All work submitted in this class should be your own work. If you include any material in your work that is not of your own creation, you **must clearly indicate and/or link to the original source.**The same rule applies to ideas as well as direct quotes.

If you hand in any work that is not your own and do not provide a source, you have committed plagiarism. **The penalty for even a single instance of plagiarism -- even if it was unintentional -- is failure of the course.**

2) You cannot include in your blog posts or stories any audio, video, photos, animation, etc. that are not your own work **unless you have written permission of the copyright holder of that work.**You will receive no credit for the use of such items and you may face legal action from the copyright holder.

3) You cannot recycle material from another class for your assignments for this class, and vice versa. The university policy on academic integrity states it is a violation to submit "substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization of the instructor(s). What constitutes a 'substantial portion' of the same work is determined solely by the university.

**"Typical Examples:**Submitting the same or substantially the same work for credit in more than one course without prior permission of the instructor. Building upon or reworking prior work is acceptable with permission of the instructor."

**Multiple submissions will result in failure on the assignment and/or failure of one or more courses.**

For more on this topic, please review the Towson University [**Student Academic Integrity Policy**](http://wwwnew.towson.edu/provost/resources/studentacademic.asp)and the Mass Communication and Communication Studies Department's [**Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating.**](http://www.towson.edu/~lieb/MCOM407/mccsplagiarism.html) If you have any questions on what constitutes plagiarism, please don't hesitate to ask.

## Class tutorials

Here is a list of links to tutorials you might find useful throughout the semester. More will be added as needed, so check back often.

* [**Start Your Own Magazine**](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/160238)
* [**Sample Business Plan**](http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/business-plans/Business-Plans-Volume-01/Magazine-Publisher.html)
* [**Everything You Need to Know to Work Productively in Trello**](http://computers.tutsplus.com/tutorials/everything-you-need-to-know-to-work-productively-in-trello--cms-21450)
* [**InDesign Tutorials**](https://helpx.adobe.com/indesign/tutorials.html)
* [**CSS Basics**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/cssbasics.docx): Learn the basic concepts of CSS
* [**CSS Cheat Sheet**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/css3-cheat-sheet.pdf): A handy reference to all the CSS properties and values.
* [**PhotoShop template for title slide or banner.**](http://www.towson.edu/~lieb/MCOM407/Soundslides_title.psd)
* [**Creating InDesign Style Sheets**](http://www.graphic-design-employment.com/indesign-style-sheets.html)
* [**Barclay's Business Plan Generator**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/Barclays.pdf)
* [**Launch plan materials from 25 to Life**](https://tigerweb.towson.edu/tlieb/mcom458/25tolife)