CMST 3790 - Personal Brand Communication

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section A01, CRN 42627,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Professor & Student Media Advisor
Instructor Professional Qualifications: Ph. D., Communication, Kent State University, 2007
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Course Description

3790. Personal Brand Communication. Introduction to the concepts personal brand communication, media image management, personal image repair, review of name-image-likeness (NIL) principles and practices. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Choose One	No Textbook required		

NO TEXTBOOK REQUIRED. Because the personal brand industry evolves rapidly, a traditional textbook is outdated the moment it is printed. All required readings for this course will be provided via active links in the syllabus and on Blackboard. Readings will consist of industry reports, case studies, and articles from leading personal brand influencers.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
10/19	What is Branding? by Allie Decker (2015). https://www.thebrandingjournal.com/2015/10/what-is-branding-definition/ What is Personal Branding? by Adam Heiztman (2014). https://www.searchenginejournal.com/what-is-personal-branding-why-important/327367/ What Is Self-Promotion and How Can You Use It for Your Personal Brand? by Claire Bahn (2021). https://clairebahn.com/self-promotion/ Guide to Personal Branding by Jay Fuchs (n.d.). https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/the-ultimate-guide-to-personal-branding	Module 1: Introduction to Personal Branding	Create a LinkedIn Profile (MLO 1.2) Complete Personal Brand Package check points 1 through 3. I also refer to these as PBP (short for Personal Brand Package) and C1 (for check point 1, etc.): C1 Your LinkedIn Profile Link (MLO 1.2) C2 Personality Trait Assessment (MLOs 1.5, 1.6) C3 Three Defining Personal Brand Terms (MLOs 1.5, 1.6) Complete LinkedIn Learning Certificate by completing the "Creating Your Personal Brand" course with international branding specialist Lida Citron (MLO 1.4) Take Personal Brand Chat Quiz 1 (MLO 1.3)

10/26	WEBSITE READINGS Review the follow site(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. Personal Brand Statement Examples and Tips To Create Your Own by Claire Bahn, LinkedIn. (2022). https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/personal-brand-statement-examples-tips-create-your-own-claire-bahn/ What is Name, Image, and Likeness by Hillary Cairns, College Raptor. (2022). https://www.collegeraptor.com/find-colleges/articles/questions-answers/name-image-likeness-ncaa/ How To Build An Authentic Personal Brand With Purpose by Ryan O'Keeffe, Forbes. (2022). https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesagencycouncil/2022/12/19/how-to-build-an-authentic-personal-brand-with-purpose/ ARTICLE READINGS Review the follow article(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. You will find this reading on the next step in this module. The Visual Identity of Your Personal Brand by Dr. Adam Earnheardt References: Instructor Resources	Module 2: Building your Personal Brand Foundation	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week. Update LinkedIn Profiles (MLO 2.5) Update your profile pic (if needed) Add a headline Add a summary Add a section (experiences, skills/endorsements, etc.) Create 10 new connections Complete Personal Brand Package check points C4 Mission Statement and C5 Image (MLO 2.1, 2.4) C4 Personal Brand Mission Statement (MLO 2.1) C5 Professional Image (Profile Image and Headline on LinkedIn) (MLOs 2.2, 2.4)
11/2	WEBSITE READINGS Review the follow site(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. 4 Steps to Build a Personal Board of Directors by Arpad Szakal. (2020) https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/4-steps-build-personal-board-directors-because-youre-szakal-mraes/ 11 Social Media Networks to Use for Personal Branding by Jennifer Dublino. (2024) https://www.business.com/articles/social-media-for-personal-branding/ ARTICLE READINGS Review the follow article(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. You will find these readings on the next two steps in this module. How To Select The Best "Board of Directors" for Your Personal Brand by Dr. Adam Earnheardt Social Media Platforms for Personal Branding by Dr. Adam Earnheardt References: Instructor Resources	Module 3: Platform Selection and Brand Governance	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week. LinkedIn Profiles (not tied to a specific MLO, this is a continuation of the LinkedIn Profile assignment) (CO 2, 4) Create 10 more "new" connections Request at least one recommendation from your connections A recommendation is written to recognize or commend a connection, such as a colleague, business partner, or student. There's no limit to the number of recommendations you can request for. Once you accept a recommendation written by a connection, it becomes visible to your network by default. You can also hide recommendations that you think don't suit your professional goals. Personal Brand Package C6: Summary - Tell Your Story (this content is for LinkedIn and will also be used for an "About Me" page on website, no direct MLO alignment) C7: Personal Brand Board of Directors (MLO 3.1) C8: Pick Your Personal Brand Social Platforms (MLOs 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)
11/9	WEBSITE READINGS Review the follow site(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. What is an Influencer? (2025) – Social Media Influencers Defined from Influencer Marketing Hub https://influencermarketinghub.com/what-is-an-influencer/	Module 4: Review An Influencer	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week.

11/16	13 Tips for Choosing the Perfect Domain Name by Zoe Ashbridge (n.d.). https://blog.hubspot.com/website/how-to-choose-domain-name How To Register Your Website's Domain Name (for Free) by Anna Fitzgerald (n.d.). https://blog.hubspot.com/website/how-to-register-domain-name Free vs Paid Websites: What You Need to Know by Ashish Ezhava (2024). https://medium.com/@ashishezhava/free-vs-paid-websites-what-you-need-to-know-8ff30dd5d2d4 Wix Website Builder: What is It And How to Use it in 2025 by Rankon Technologies (2024). https://www.rankontechnologies.com/wix-website-builder/	Module 5: Wix and Building Your Personal Brand Website	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week. Request 10 more "new" connections for your LinkedIn Profiles (CO 2) Personal Brand Package C9: Create Your Domain Name (MLO 5.1, 5.3) Take Personal Brand Chat Quiz 4 (no direct MLO alignment) Personal Brand Website Assignment (MLO 5.2, 5.4; course level alignment with CO 5) Complete the LinkedIn Learning Course - Website Creation With Wix (note: plan ahead - this will take 2.5 hours to complete) Answer pre-build questions about your personal website (submit these on Blackboard with a link to your website on Wix)
11/23	WEBSITE READINGS Review the follow site(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. Six Hidden Risks to Personal Branding by John Rampton (2016). https://www.fastcompany.com/3065169/six-hidden-risks-to-personal-branding ARTICLE READINGS Review the follow article(s) and look over the information for the topic we are focusing on this week. Pros and Cons of Creating a Personal Brand Maintenance Plan by Dr. Adam Earnheardt (MLO 6.1, 6.3) Personal Brand Versus Online Identity by Dr. Adam Earnheardt (MLO 6.4)	Module 6: Maintaining and Evolving Your Personal Brand	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week. Personal Brand Package Check Point: C10: Curating Content for Your Personal Brand (MLO 6.1) C11: Social Media Monitoring and Scheduling Tool (MLO 6.2, 6.3) Take Personal Brand Chat Quiz 5 (CO 1) Personal Brand Website Assignment (no direct MLO alignment, course level alignment with CO 5). This isn't actually due until the end of Module 7, but you should be working on it now.
11/30	No readings.	Module 7: Reflecting and Safeguarding Your Evolving Personal Brand	Submit your completed assignments by Sunday at 11:59pm of this week. Personal Brand Package Check Point: C12: Measurement and Analysis Personal Brand Website Assignment (CO 5)

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