



ADV4930: Agency Essentials

Variable Credit Hours

Fall 2025

Instructor

Lainey Johnson, MBA

- Contact via e-Learning (Canvas message) or text/call 630.209.1555 •
Office Hours or Zoom conference welcomed and by appointment

Course Website

<https://elearning.ufl.edu>

Course Description

The Agency is an innovative real-world advertising and public relations firm located at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications. It provides students with an exceptional opportunity to enhance their expertise and gain practical experience in a hands-on environment. Students work directly with clients and industry professionals, allowing them to develop their skills and knowledge.

This immersion course serves as a foundation for employment at an agency and acts as a precursor for those interested in joining The Agency at UF. Its main objective is to fully immerse students in the essential aspects of agency operations and best practices, preparing them to work effectively within an agency environment. Teaming therefore is a major focus of the class. The prerequisite for this course is ADV3008. Class attendance at predetermined meetings at The Agency at UF (more below) is required.

While the course primarily focuses on experiences most relevant to advertising agencies, the knowledge and insights gained can be applied to careers and experiences in communications and PR agencies as well.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the operations, processes, and dynamics of working at an advertising agency.
2. Create real-world-based assignments with students, faculty, and staff at The Agency at UF.
3. Use best practices working with media partners and in an agency team environment.
4. Demonstrate acumen with digital advertising.
5. Apply best practices from real-world practitioners, on-air talents, and influencers.
6. Create responses to ethical challenges.
7. Practice high performance teaming.

Required Textbooks

- Arens, W., Weigold, M., Arens, C. & Schaefer, D. (2022). *M: Advertising*. 4th ed. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-1260381894
- Luttrell, R. M. & Capizzo, L. W. (2018). *The PR Agency Handbook*. Sage. ISBN: 978-1506329055

Additional Suggested Readings and Resources

The following are suggested readings and resources for the course: •

[Association of National Advertisers](#) content and learning resources

- National news and trade publications, such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *PR Week*, *The Holmes Report*, *AdWeek* and *AdAge*. Free content is available on all the listed publications, and you can create free accounts to several of these with your UFL login. You should also subscribe to their daily/weekly newsletters.
 - Online databases accessible through the UF Library, such as WARC, Mintel, Simmons and Statista. See the [advertising](#) and [public relations](#) UF Library guides. You must be signed on with the UF VPN to access these databases.
- Training videos available on [LinkedIn Learning](#). You may access LinkedIn Learning for free with your UFL login.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

As a senior-level immersion course, ADV4930 will build on the foundational concepts that you have learned in prior courses. These themes include but are not limited to case study analysis, interviewing, obtaining digital certifications, and journalistic writing. You will apply these principles as well as new learnings from our lectures, guest speakers, readings, and other materials to develop real-world agency skills.

Minimum Technology Requirements

The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their degree program. A student's computer configuration should include webcam, microphone, broadband access, and Microsoft office suite.

Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review before starting their program.

More [information on technical requirements](#) is available at the UF Online website. *Minimum Technical Skills*

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of operating a computer and using word processing software.

Materials/Supply Fees

There is no supply fee for this course.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment Group Percentage of Grade	
PlayPosit Quizzes	10%
Agency Lectures/Prompts	15%
Weekly Assignments	35%
Response to a Brief	40%

Point Totals

Assignment Points	
PlayPosit Quizzes	10 @ 4 points each
Reflection: Teammates	8 points

Creating a Brief	8 points
Agency Interview	12 points
Agency Certification	12 points
In Agency Participation	48 points
Conflict Scenario Analysis and Response	12 points
Team's Response to a Brief	60 points

Total:	200 points
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Grading Policies

Late submissions are accepted, with a penalty of **20%** for each day of lateness. Please remember that Canvas is a computer and is precise, so do not wait until the last minute to start or submit your assignment. 11:59:00 is on time, 11:59:30 is late.

If you have a legitimate excuse as to why your assignment is late or missing, please submit your documentation to the [Dean of Students Office](#).

If you have a grading concern when you receive feedback, you must submit this request within 1 week of receiving your grade on the assignment. Requests after one week will not be accepted.

My goal is to grade all assignments within 2 weeks of due date, but there may be delays in grading during the semester. Note that final grades will be graded by the instructor deadline. There is no need to follow up with the instructor to verify grades will be submitted. Assume this will be done.

Make up assignments or extended deadlines will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Reach out to me directly if you require such an accommodation. I do understand that things happen, but it is important to meet deadlines both in college and in the real world.

Note grade explanations and responses may be uploaded as recorded responses.

All team assignments must be submitted as a team. Any team issues must be reported to the instructor in a timely fashion to resolve teaming issues. No individual responses to team assignments will be accepted.

All team assignments must have every team member who participated clearly listed at the upfront of all deliverables.

Grading Scale

A 100-94	A- 93-90	B+ 89-87	B 86-84	B- 83-80	C+ 79-77	C 76-74	C- 73-70	D+ 69-67	D 66-64	D- 63-61	F 60 and below
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UF has provided [information on grades and grading policies](#) at the university website.

Attendance Policy

As this is a mostly online course, you are expected to exhibit a high level of self discipline. Each module was designed for completion on a week-by-week basis (with a few exceptions of assignments being worked on over multiple modules). During Week 1, I recommend you peruse each module in Canvas to familiarize yourself with deliverables, number of lectures, and readings.

If you have a particular way you like to organize your workload, I encourage you to set up these systems in Week 1 so you can keep track of your deliverables. Each module includes assigned readings, videos, supplemental materials, and assignments. Please complete all modules within their respective weeks and by their listed deadlines. You are expected to complete all assignments by their stated due date. Additionally, I expect you to complete the readings in advance of watching the lectures.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university [attendance policies](#).

In Agency Attendance

A hallmark of this course is exposure to a real life agency. Therefore, attendance at approximately 3 pre-determined meetings at The Agency at UF is required and makes up a significant portion of the grade a student receives. This is a great

opportunity to tour The Agency and meet the staff and participants. Attendance will be taken live. If you are unavailable to attend these meetings, please drop the course during drop/add. Please do not e-mail the instructor asking for an exception as this is a requirement of this course and has been properly communicated here within this syllabus and at registration.

Quiz Policy

The orientation quiz does not count towards your final average, but it must be completed at a score of 100% before the rest of the course will open. There are also a number of graded PlayPosit quizzes embedded in the module lectures. All quizzes may be taken multiple times.

Final Exam

The Response to a Brief assignment will be treated as your final exam and completed as a team. The rationale behind this is that every lesson should culminate in an understanding of what makes a best-in-class brief. Your examination and analysis of the sample brief is a good way to assess your comprehension of these standards. A recorded response may be used to react to the assignment/provide feedback. Note as this is a final assignment, the instructor expects a detailed, comprehensive deliverable incorporating learnings from lectures throughout the course. If the deliverable is not “client ready” or does not exhibit that the student has provided enough detail demonstrating learnings from the lectures, points will be deducted accordingly.

*Important: In the tactics section of the deliverable, ALL details of how the tactics will come to life must be demonstrated. Solo submission of this assignment will result in significant point deduction. Any team challenges or issues must be reported in a timely fashion or else the instructor will not be able to help resolve.

Class Participation Policy

This is an asynchronous course in that we don’t have a set time each week to meet and discuss the material. However, there are due dates each week. It is vital that you meet those due dates, as extensions and/or assignment forgiveness are not given without a university-approved excuse. As stated above, meetings at the Agency at UF are required.

Tips for Success

Early in the week – over the weekend, or by Monday at the latest – you should read

through the Canvas module pages for the week to get an idea of what you will need to do and how much time you will need to allot for each activity.

I recommend blocking out several chunks of time each week that you will dedicate to working on this course, the same way that you would have scheduled lecture times for a synchronous course. Also, schedule when you will complete your **required** attendance at the Agency (at least every other week).

To succeed in the course, remember to do the following: Digest course content, make use of resources available to you, team appropriately, and pace yourself by working ahead on the two capstone assignments.

Remember that success is possible with time, effort, and commitment!

Teaming

Once the drop/add period has ended, it's time to connect with your assigned group and begin building rapport. There will be assignments designated as group work, so establishing a strong working dynamic early on is essential.

Each group has been randomly assigned a team leader. This person is solely responsible for submitting the group's assignments. Only the designated team leader should upload the final submission. However, it's critical that all team members' names are clearly listed at the top of each assignment.

Immediately after drop/add is the time to establish your group's communication rhythm, define roles, and agree on how you'll collaborate on upcoming projects. Group assignments should reflect the quality and cohesion expected in a real-world professional setting—they must be polished, collaborative efforts that represent the team as a whole.

If any issues arise within your team, please bring them to the instructor's attention early in the semester. Addressing challenges sooner rather than later will help ensure a smooth and successful group experience for everyone.

UF Policies

Privacy

Any online class sessions may be audio-visually recorded. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image.

Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to having your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared.

As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

University Policy on Academic Conduct

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The [Conduct Code](#) specifies behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor for this class.

Plagiarism

The [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#) states that:

- "A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
 - Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
 - Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
 - Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
 - Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author."

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing a course evaluation online via GatorEvals. The university has provided [guidance on how to give feedback](#).

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete the evaluation either through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via the [GatorEvals website](#).

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at the [GatorEvals results page](#).

Etiquette and Netiquette

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. UF has provided a [netiquette guide](#).

Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course.

A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services.

A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, August 5th, 2021, Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Getting Help and Additional Resources

For issues with technical difficulties for e-Learning, please contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#). The phone number is (352) 392-HELP (4357).

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST email your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

More Technical Resources

- [UF Licensed Software](#) Students can access software programs like Office 365 and Adobe at free or reduced rates.
- [UF All Access](#) The University of Florida's digital course materials program. Selected courses are available through UF All Access to provide students with the lowest prices on their eBooks and courseware products.
- [UF Apps](#) Provides access to software applications from any computing device--laptops, tablets, desktops, and smartphones—from any location, at any time. • [VPN](#) The Gatorlink VPN service provides secure remote access to the University of Florida network and makes it appear as if your computer were physically attached to the campus network. By using the Gatorlink VPN client, you may access resources on the UF network that are not typically available over an Internet path. • [Canvas Quickstart Guide](#) This short guide will get you started with using Canvas. • [Training and Safety](#) UFIT offers free software and other technical training sessions for students, teachers, and staff.
- [Safe Computing Practices](#) Learn how to protect your computer from threats regardless of brand, model, and operating system.
- [Zoom](#) is an easy-to-use video conferencing service available to all UF students, faculty, and staff that allows for meetings of up to 100 participants.

More Resources for Online Students

Available at the [Distance Learning website](#). These include:

- Counseling and wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Health and Wellness

If you or someone you know is in distress, please visit the [U Matter, We Care](#) website or call 352-392-1575 to refer or report a concern. A team member will reach out.

Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services and non-crisis services.

Visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#) or call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information on finding the care you need.

For safety and support, visit the [University Police Department website](#) or call 352-392- 1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

For immediate medical care, call 352-733-0111 or go to the UF Health/Shands Emergency Room and Trauma Center at 1515 SW Archer Road.

For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including wellness coaching for academic success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

COVID-19

In response to COVID-19, UF has established practices to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

[UF COVID Information](#)

[UF Guidance on Health and Wellness](#)

Academic Resources

- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. [Distance student resources](#) are also available.
- [Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment, 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- [Student Complaints and Grievances](#) Information is available in the Student Honor Code and Conduct Code.
- [University Registrar](#) Find information on records, data, and enrollment.
- [Academic Deadlines and Calendar](#) Consult for all important upcoming events.
- [UF Online Resources](#) Access to many services to help you achieve your goals.

Accessibility and Privacy Policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Adobe
 - [Adobe Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Adobe Accessibility](#)
- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft
 - [Microsoft Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Microsoft Accessibility](#)
- PlayPosit
 - [PlayPosit Privacy Policy](#)
 - [PlayPosit Accessibility](#)
- Sonic Foundry (Mediasite Streaming Video Player)
 - [Sonic Foundry Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Sonic Foundry Accessibility](#) (PDF)
- YouTube (Google)
 - [YouTube \(Google\) Privacy Policy](#)
 - [YouTube \(Google\) Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)

ACEJMC Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools

and technologies.

- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve. • Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work. • Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts. • Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this syllabus is, to the best knowledge of this instructor, considered correct and complete when distributed to students. The instructor reserves the right, acting within the policies and procedures of the University of Florida, to make necessary changes in course content or instructional techniques with notification to students.