

TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Student-Centered, Authentic Learning in Communication and Digital Media

Jared Rosaline Hernandez

Email: jared.rosaline@gmail.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jaredrosaline/>

Portfolio Website: (Coming Soon)

July 2026

Table of Contents

Portfolio Overview	3
1. Teaching Philosophy	4
2. Course Design: Syllabus	7
3. Course Alignment Map	12
4. Assessment and Rubric	15
5. Teaching with Technology	17
References	19

Portfolio Overview

This teaching portfolio presents my approach to teaching communication, branding, and digital media through student-centered instruction, authentic assessment, intentional course alignment, and thoughtful technology integration. The materials were developed and revised throughout the MMC6930 Seminar in Mass Communication Teaching. Together, they demonstrate how my teaching philosophy informs the design of a proposed undergraduate hybrid course, Brand Storytelling and Digital Communication.

The portfolio begins with my teaching philosophy, which establishes the beliefs that guide my work as an educator. It then presents a complete course syllabus, a two-module alignment map, a major-project rubric, and a teaching-with-technology statement. Each section includes brief context explaining why the artifact matters and how it connects to my broader teaching practice.

Portfolio at a Glance

Portfolio Component	Purpose
Teaching Philosophy	My beliefs about student support, engagement, confidence, authentic learning, assessment, and continuous improvement.
Course Syllabus	A complete 15-week hybrid course designed around branding, storytelling, audience research, and digital communication.
Course Alignment Map	Evidence that objectives, materials, learning activities, assessments, and technology support one another.
Assessment Rubric	A transparent evaluation tool for a research-based Brand Strategy Portfolio Project.
Teaching with Technology	A focused explanation of how Canva supports authentic learning without becoming the focus of instruction.

1 Teaching Philosophy

A statement of the beliefs and practices that shape my work as an educator.

The following teaching philosophy explains how I support student confidence, engagement, creativity, and independence. It matters to my practice because it provides the foundation for the course design, assessment choices, feedback structures, and learning experiences presented throughout this portfolio.

Introduction

My teaching philosophy is centered on the belief that students learn best when they feel supported, engaged, and connected to what they are learning. Education extends beyond memorization by helping students develop confidence, creativity, critical thinking, and real-world problem-solving skills. Through my experience as both a middle school teacher and a graduate student, I have seen how meaningful relationships and engaging instruction directly influence student success. My philosophy is strongly influenced by the Nurturing and Apprenticeship teaching perspectives, which emphasize encouragement, mentorship, and authentic learning experiences. These perspectives shape how I build relationships with students, design learning experiences, and create environments where students feel challenged while also feeling supported.

Aspirations, Goals, and Objectives

My teaching philosophy emphasizes creating a learning environment where students build confidence in themselves and their abilities. Students learn most effectively when they feel comfortable asking questions, taking intellectual risks, and actively participating in the learning process. Rather than focusing solely on memorization, I encourage students to understand how concepts connect to real-world experiences, professional practice, and future careers.

I also believe education should foster critical thinking, communication, creativity, and independence. These skills extend beyond the classroom and prepare students to solve problems, collaborate effectively, and adapt to an ever-changing professional environment.

Teaching Methods and Approaches

I use interactive and student-centered instructional methods because I believe learning occurs most effectively when students actively engage with ideas rather than passively receive information. Discussions, collaborative learning, guided practice, creative projects, and real-world applications encourage students to construct knowledge through experience while developing confidence in their own abilities.

My background in communication, branding, and digital media reinforces the importance of authentic learning experiences that allow students to apply concepts visually, strategically, and creatively. Rather than separating theory from practice, I intentionally connect classroom instruction to real-world communication challenges so students understand the relevance of what they are learning.

My teaching is also influenced by the Apprenticeship perspective. I believe students develop expertise through guided practice, constructive feedback, and increasing independence over time. As students gain confidence, I gradually shift responsibility to them, encouraging critical thinking, problem solving, and ownership of their learning.

Assessment of Student Understanding

Assessment serves as both a measure of student understanding and an opportunity for continued growth. While quizzes and traditional assessments provide valuable information, students also demonstrate learning through creativity, participation, collaboration, reflection, and authentic application of course concepts.

Because students learn in different ways, I use a variety of formative and summative assessments, including discussions, presentations, projects, peer collaboration, reflections, and quizzes. Using multiple forms of assessment creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in meaningful ways while providing a more complete picture of their progress.

Feedback is an essential part of the learning process. I view assessment as a tool for growth rather than simply evaluation. Timely, constructive feedback helps students recognize both their strengths and areas for improvement while encouraging persistence, reflection, and continuous development.

Teaching Within My Discipline

Communication, branding, digital media, and creative design require both technical expertise and strong interpersonal communication skills. My teaching philosophy emphasizes helping students become strategic thinkers who can communicate ideas clearly, collaborate effectively, and adapt to changing technologies and professional environments.

Students in creative disciplines often experience self-doubt and fear of criticism, particularly when presenting original work. I believe supportive learning environments encourage students to view feedback as part of the creative process rather than as personal criticism. By establishing a classroom culture built on respect, collaboration, and constructive feedback, students develop confidence while strengthening both their creative and professional communication skills.

Reflection and Continuous Improvement

Effective teaching requires continuous reflection and growth. I regularly evaluate my instructional practices through self-reflection, student feedback, professional development, and collaboration with other educators. Reflection allows me to identify successful instructional strategies while recognizing opportunities for improvement.

My teaching philosophy continues to evolve as I gain new experiences, explore emerging educational research, and learn from my students. Maintaining a reflective mindset ensures that my teaching remains responsive, engaging, and centered on student success. Ultimately, I strive to create learning environments where students leave not only with new knowledge, but also with greater confidence, independence, curiosity, and the ability to apply their learning beyond the classroom.

2 Course Design: Syllabus

A complete undergraduate hybrid course in brand storytelling and digital communication.

The following syllabus translates my teaching philosophy into a complete course structure. It demonstrates how I communicate expectations, organize content, support students, and create authentic opportunities to connect communication theory with professional branding practice.

MMC 3339 – Brand Storytelling and Digital Communication

Academic Term	Spring 2027
Delivery Method	Hybrid
Credit Hours	3
Instructor	Jared Rosaline Hernandez
Email	rhernandez4@ufl.edu
Office Hours	Tuesdays 2:00-4:00 PM by appointment via Zoom
Response Time	Within 24-48 hours on weekdays

Welcome

Welcome to Brand Storytelling and Digital Communication. Branding is much more than creating a logo; it is about building meaningful experiences that connect organizations with people. Throughout this course, you will think like a communication strategist, storyteller, and creative problem-solver while developing projects that reflect real-world branding and digital communication practices. My goal is to create an engaging, collaborative learning environment where creativity, critical thinking, and experimentation are encouraged while preparing you for professional work in the communication industry.

Course Description

Brand Storytelling and Digital Communication explores how organizations build meaningful relationships with audiences through strategic communication, visual identity, and digital experiences. Students will examine branding theory, storytelling techniques, audience research, content strategy, and visual communication while analyzing successful brands across multiple industries. Through case studies, collaborative discussions, and authentic creative projects, students will develop professional branding materials and communication strategies that reflect current industry practices. By the end of the course, students will be able to create, evaluate, and present branding solutions grounded in communication theory and audience-centered design.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites required.

Course-Level Learning Objectives

1. Identify the major components of effective brand identity and strategic communication.
2. Explain how storytelling influences audience perception, engagement, and brand loyalty.
3. Analyze branding strategies using communication theory and audience research.
4. Evaluate digital communication campaigns using established branding principles.
5. Create original branding materials that effectively communicate with a defined target audience.
6. Present and justify branding decisions using professional communication and evidence-based reasoning.

Required Instructional Materials

No textbook is required. All instructional materials will be provided through Canvas. Students will use:

- Harvard Business Review branding and marketing articles
- HubSpot Marketing Blog articles
- Professional branding and communication case studies
- TED Talks on storytelling and communication
- Canva Design School tutorials
- Nielsen Norman Group UX articles
- Instructor-created lectures and resources

These materials expose students to current industry practices while helping them apply communication theory to authentic branding projects.

Materials and Supply Fees

None. Students should have regular access to a laptop or tablet, an internet connection, Canva (free version), and Canvas LMS.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Percentage
Weekly Discussions and Reflections	20%
Brand Analysis Project	25%
Creative Brand Development Project	35%
Peer Feedback and Participation	10%
Quizzes	10%
Total	100%

Assessment Transparency

- Quizzes assess comprehension of key terminology and foundational branding concepts.
- Discussions and reflections evaluate critical thinking, participation, and the ability to connect theory to practice.
- Projects assess students' ability to apply branding, storytelling, audience research, and communication strategies to authentic scenarios.
- Peer feedback evaluates collaboration, professionalism, and constructive communication.

Creative work is evaluated based on research, strategy, audience awareness, communication effectiveness, and justification of design decisions - not artistic ability alone.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B+	87-89%
B	80-86%
C+	77-79%
C	70-76%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and actively participate in discussions, workshops, critiques, and collaborative learning activities. Because communication and branding are developed through practice and interaction, participation is an essential component of student success. Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining course materials, completing missed work, and communicating with the instructor regarding extended absences.

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments should be submitted by the published deadlines in Canvas. Assignments submitted within 48 hours of the deadline will receive a 10% deduction unless prior arrangements have been approved. Assignments submitted after 48 hours may receive additional deductions. Extensions may be granted for documented emergencies or significant personal circumstances when communicated as early as possible.

Technology Policy

Technology is an essential component of this course. Students are expected to bring a laptop or tablet capable of accessing Canvas, Canva, and other required course resources during designated class activities. Technology should support learning, collaboration, research, and creativity. Personal use of devices that distracts from instruction may negatively affect participation.

Communication Policy

Students are encouraged to communicate questions or concerns as early as possible. Email is the primary method of communication, and messages will typically receive a response within 24-48 hours during weekdays. Important course announcements, assignment reminders, and updates will be posted through Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to produce original work and properly acknowledge all outside sources. Because branding often involves research and inspiration, students should distinguish between inspiration and plagiarism. Presenting another person's work as one's own, including AI-generated content submitted without authorization or attribution, violates university academic integrity expectations and may result in disciplinary action.

Student Support Resources

Disability Accommodations

Students requesting classroom accommodations should first register with the University's Disability Resource Center. Once accommodations have been approved, students should provide documentation to the instructor as early as possible to ensure appropriate support.

Academic Support

Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center, library research services, academic advising, tutoring services, and Canvas Student Guides.

Student Wellness

Mental health and well-being are important components of academic success. Students experiencing personal, emotional, or academic challenges are encouraged to use university counseling services and wellness resources.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Major Assignment
1	Introduction to Branding	Personal Brand Reflection
2	Brand Identity Foundations	Brand Analysis
3	Audience Research	Audience Persona
4	Storytelling Principles	Discussion
5	Brand Voice and Messaging	Messaging Exercise
6	Visual Identity Systems	Mood Board
7	Color Theory and Typography	Design Critique
8	Midterm Project Workshop	Project Proposal
9	Digital Communication Strategy	Social Media Campaign
10	Website and User Experience	UX Analysis
11	Content Strategy	Content Calendar
12	Brand Campaign Development	Creative Project
13	Peer Critiques and Revision	Draft Review
14	Final Presentation Workshop	Practice Presentation
15	Final Brand Presentation	Final Project

Quality Matters Integration

This syllabus incorporates multiple Quality Matters standards by clearly connecting course objectives, instructional materials, assessments, and learning activities. Course-level objectives are measurable and directly aligned with assessments and instructional resources. Assessment expectations and grading criteria are communicated transparently, while instructional materials directly support the stated learning objectives. Students engage in meaningful interaction through discussions, collaborative projects, peer critiques, and authentic learning experiences. These elements work together to create a transparent, organized, and student-centered learning experience.

Accessibility and Usability

This syllabus uses clear headings, consistent organization, readable fonts, descriptive section titles, and structured tables. Course materials will be provided in accessible digital formats whenever possible, and

Canvas will serve as the central location for assignments, announcements, instructional materials, and student resources.

3 Course Alignment Map

A two-module map connecting objectives, materials, activities, assessments, and course tools.

The following section provides a sample course alignment map. I develop an alignment map before teaching a course because it allows me to confirm that the learning objectives, instructional materials, learning activities, assessments, and technology support one another. This process helps prevent assignments from becoming disconnected tasks and keeps the course focused on meaningful student learning.

Course-Level Objectives

7. Analyze how brands use storytelling and communication strategies to connect with audiences.
8. Evaluate the relationship between audience research, messaging, and brand identity.
9. Apply branding principles to create audience-centered communication strategies.
10. Develop original branding concepts using research, creativity, and digital communication tools.
11. Present and justify creative decisions using professional communication practices.

Module 1: Foundations of Branding and Communication

Module-Level Objectives	Assignments / Assessments	Instructional Materials	Learning Activities	Course Tools
1. Identify major elements of brand identity. 2. Explain how storytelling influences audience perception. 3. Analyze successful and unsuccessful branding examples. 4. Describe the connection between emotion, communication, and brand experience.	Personal Brand Reflection; Brand Case Study Discussion; Module 1 Knowledge Check Quiz	Simon Sinek TED Talk, How Great Leaders Inspire Action; Harvard Business Review article, A Refresher on A/B Testing; professional brand campaigns from Nike, Apple, and Airbnb	Review professional branding examples; participate in discussions; compare brand strategies; reflect on personal experiences with brands	Canvas LMS; discussion boards; YouTube; Canva/Figma
<i>Objectives build foundational knowledge before students move into strategy development.</i>	<i>Reflection, discussion, and quiz allow students to demonstrate understanding in multiple ways.</i>	<i>Materials provide real-world examples of branding concepts.</i>	<i>Activities connect theory to realistic communication examples.</i>	<i>Digital tools support creativity, communication, and engagement.</i>

Alignment rationale: Module 1 establishes shared vocabulary and foundational understanding before students progress into audience research and strategy development.

Module 2: Audience Research and Brand Strategy

Module-Level Objectives	Assignments / Assessments	Instructional Materials	Learning Activities	Course Tools
1. Analyze characteristics and needs of target audiences. 2. Evaluate how audience research impacts communication decisions. 3. Apply research findings to develop strategic brand messaging. 4. Create audience-centered branding recommendations.	Audience Research Discussion; Brand Strategy Portfolio Project; Peer Feedback Reflection	HubSpot Audience Persona Development Guide; Nielsen consumer research examples; professional brand strategy case studies; video examples from The Futur branding channel	Analyze audiences; evaluate communication strategies; collaborate with peers; develop research-based brand recommendations	Canvas LMS; discussion boards; Google Docs; Canva/Figma
<i>Objectives progress from analysis into creation and professional application.</i>	<i>The project measures students' ability to apply audience research rather than only recognize concepts.</i>	<i>Professional examples serve as models before students develop their own strategy.</i>	<i>Practice, feedback, and revision build toward the final assessment.</i>	<i>Tools encourage collaboration and mirror professional creative workflows.</i>

Final Alignment Self-Check

After reviewing feedback on my previous alignment map, I revised the course components to create stronger connections among course objectives, module objectives, instructional materials, assignments, and activities. I added course-level objectives to clarify the overall goals of the course and included module rationale rows explaining the purpose behind each design decision.

The most significant revision was strengthening the Module 2 assessment. Instead of only analyzing audience research, students now complete a Brand Strategy Portfolio Project in which they apply research findings and create recommendations. This better aligns with the course goal of helping students develop real-world communication skills.

Accessibility Check

The alignment map uses clear headings, organized tables, consistent formatting, and readable language. Course materials will be checked for accessibility using Microsoft Accessibility Checker so students can navigate and access content successfully.

4 Assessment and Rubric

A transparent, evidence-based evaluation tool for an authentic branding project.

The following rubric evaluates the Brand Strategy Portfolio Project introduced in Module 2. I use rubrics to make expectations visible before students begin an assignment, support consistent grading, and help students understand the difference between visual polish and strategic thinking. The criteria prioritize audience research, evidence-based recommendations, application of course concepts, and professional communication.

Brand Strategy Portfolio Project

Assignment Overview

Students select an existing brand, research its target audience, evaluate the brand's current communication strategy, and develop evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the brand's connection with its audience. Students present their findings in a professional portfolio that clearly connects audience research, branding concepts, storytelling principles, and strategic communication decisions.

Students use at least three credible sources, which may include demographic data, industry reports, social media analytics, market research, consumer behavior research, or other relevant professional sources.

Brand Strategy Portfolio Project Rubric

Criterion	Exemplary 25 pts	Proficient 22.5 pts	Basic 17.5 pts	Non-Performance 0 pts
Audience Research and Analysis	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the target audience using at least three credible and relevant sources. Analysis includes demographics, psychographics, behaviors, needs, values, media habits, or purchasing motivations. Conclusions are clearly supported with evidence.	Demonstrates a good understanding of the target audience using credible research. Most relevant characteristics are analyzed, with minor gaps in depth, source quality, or connection between evidence and conclusions.	Provides a limited or incomplete analysis. Fewer than three credible sources may be used, or research is overly general. Audience characteristics are identified but not fully analyzed or supported.	Audience research is missing, unsupported, or does not demonstrate an accurate understanding of the target audience.
Brand Strategy and Communication Recommendations	Presents strategic, creative, realistic, and clearly explained recommendations that directly respond to audience research. Recommendations address positioning, messaging, brand voice, storytelling, content strategy, visual communication, or engagement. Each decision is fully justified with evidence.	Presents appropriate and realistic recommendations that are mostly connected to audience research. Strategic reasoning is evident, although some recommendations need stronger evidence or justification.	Presents general or underdeveloped recommendations with a limited connection to audience research. Strategic reasoning is inconsistent, and several decisions lack support.	Recommendations are missing, unrealistic, unrelated to the audience research, or unsupported by strategic reasoning.
Application of Course Concepts	Accurately and consistently applies target-audience analysis, brand identity, positioning, brand voice, storytelling, emotional connection, message consistency, and digital communication strategy. Uses these concepts to evaluate the brand and justify recommendations.	Correctly applies most required course concepts, with only minor gaps in application or explanation.	Applies some concepts, but the application is inconsistent, overly descriptive, or demonstrates limited understanding. Connections among concepts, analysis, and recommendations are unclear.	Course concepts are missing, inaccurately applied, or demonstrate major misunderstandings.
Professional Presentation and Organization	Portfolio is exceptionally organized, visually professional, and easy to navigate. Information follows a clear structure and includes appropriate headings, citations, visuals, and evidence. Writing is polished, and design choices strengthen understanding.	Portfolio is organized, professional, and generally easy to follow. Writing and formatting contain only minor errors. Visual design supports the content, with minor areas needing refinement.	Portfolio lacks consistent organization or visual clarity. Multiple writing, formatting, citation, or design errors are present, and some information is difficult to follow.	Portfolio is incomplete, poorly organized, difficult to understand, or not submitted in a professional format.

Total Points: 100

5 Teaching with Technology

A focused example of technology selected for a specific learning purpose.

The following section explains my general approach to teaching with technology and provides Canva as one example. The purpose is not to promote a particular platform, but to demonstrate how I evaluate whether a tool supports learning objectives, authentic practice, collaboration, access, feedback, and assessment.

Supporting Authentic Learning Through Canva

Technology should be integrated into a course only when it serves a clear instructional purpose. My approach to teaching with technology is centered on selecting simple, accessible tools that help students engage with course content, practice professional skills, collaborate with others, and demonstrate learning in meaningful ways. I do not believe that adding more technology automatically makes a course more engaging. Too many tools can create confusion, increase cognitive load, and distract students from the actual learning objectives. Instead, I prefer to use a limited number of tools that are intentionally aligned with the course activities and assessments.

In my proposed hybrid course, Brand Storytelling and Digital Communication, Canva provides an example of how technology can support authentic learning. One of the primary challenges in this course is helping students move beyond understanding branding concepts in theory and apply those concepts to realistic communication problems. Students must learn how audience research, storytelling, visual identity, messaging, and digital strategy work together. Canva helps address this challenge by allowing students to create professional communication materials similar to those used in branding and marketing environments.

During a unit on audience research and brand strategy, students work in small groups to develop a brand identity for a fictional local coffee shop. They begin by researching the intended audience and identifying its needs, values, preferences, media habits, and purchasing motivations. Students then use Canva to create an audience persona, mood board, color palette, typography system, logo concept, social media campaign, and final presentation. The purpose of using Canva is not simply to make the assignment visually attractive. The tool gives students a space to translate their research and strategic reasoning into a complete visual communication system.

This activity supports the course learning objective that requires students to create original branding materials based on audience research and justify their strategic decisions using professional communication practices. It also supports active learning because students analyze information, make decisions, create original work, receive feedback, and revise their ideas. These activities move students beyond recalling terminology and require them to apply, evaluate, and create.

Canva also supports collaboration and formative feedback. Students can work within a shared project, comment on one another's ideas, and revise their work throughout the design process. Drafts are reviewed during peer critiques and instructor conferences before the final portfolio is submitted. This process allows assessment to support learning rather than occur only at the end of the project.

Several challenges must be considered when using Canva. Students may rely too heavily on templates, focus on appearance rather than strategy, or have different levels of design experience. To address these concerns, I provide a brief demonstration, guided practice, tutorial resources, sample projects, and clear

design expectations. Students are also required to submit a written rationale explaining how their choices connect to audience research and course concepts. The grading rubric prioritizes audience analysis, communication strategy, application of course concepts, and justification of decisions rather than artistic ability alone.

Access and usability are also important considerations. Canva requires reliable internet access, and some features may be restricted to paid accounts. Students may use the free version, and course assignments are designed so that no paid features are required. Campus computer labs, accessible digital materials, alternative submission options, and individual support are available when students experience technical or accessibility barriers. I would also review Canva's accessibility and privacy practices before requiring students to create accounts or upload personal information.

I evaluate the effectiveness of the technology by examining whether it improves student achievement of the learning objectives. Evidence includes rubric scores, the quality of audience research and strategic reasoning, student reflections, peer feedback, participation, revision quality, and final presentations. I also use a brief student survey to determine whether Canva supported learning or created unnecessary difficulty. If students produce visually polished work but cannot explain their communication decisions, the activity would require revision. Possible changes could include additional audience-analysis instruction, fewer required design products, more guided checkpoints, or a different technology option.

My broader goal is to use technology thoughtfully rather than automatically. A technology tool is effective when it makes learning more active, authentic, accessible, or collaborative without becoming the focus of the course. Canva supports this goal by helping students connect branding theory to professional practice while still requiring research, critical thinking, strategic decision-making, and reflection.

Professional Development

Teaching is a lifelong process of reflection, revision, and growth. As I continue my career in higher education, I intend to expand this portfolio with student evaluations, examples of student work, evidence of learning, additional course materials, and professional development experiences. I view this portfolio as a living document that will evolve alongside my teaching practice and demonstrate my ongoing commitment to student-centered learning, authentic assessment, thoughtful technology integration, and continuous improvement.