INTRODUCTION
Movie marketing is a highly interactive course designed to give students a basic understanding of all aspects of movie marketing, focusing on business decisions with the goal of developing a competitive advantage for a film's opening and beyond. The course will examine a range of movies, from low-budget independent to tent pole film franchises, and explore concepts, processes and different strategic approaches used by today’s distributors.

OBJECTIVE
- To garner an overarching understanding of the concepts that drive movie marketing
- To provide an analytical framework for selecting a production, developing a distribution strategy and choosing the best marketing media
- To introduce and develop the marketing concepts instrumental in a film's release to theaters and beyond
- To provide an open forum for students to discuss current film campaigns, exercise their evaluation techniques and identify both problems and opportunities in the marketplace

The focus will be on solving marketing problems by using today’s available resources, both traditional and emerging. The class will rely on lectures, case studies, guest speakers and heavy classroom discussion to dissect current and past campaigns. Enthusiasm for both film and marketing is a must.

GRADING
Final grades will be determined on the following basis:
- Assignment 1 ............................................................................................. 12.5%
- Assignment 2 ............................................................................................. 12.5%
- Final project ................................................................................................... 50%
- Class preparation and participation ............................................................... 25%

INSTRUCTOR POLICIES
Students are expected to attend each class as well as participate and drive discussion. Absences / tardiness reflect in a lower class participating grade. Assignments are due at the beginning of class; lateness will have an adverse affect on your grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION
Like movie marketing itself, some of the best ideas are generating by brainstorming and group discussion. Therefore it is essential that you come to class fully prepared with having read the assignment, as well as having a handle on the latest industry news (see below).
Your grade will be determined based on the quality of your interaction and will be measured against the following criteria: Preparation, insights, extent of knowledge, and ability to drive / build on discussions.
READING
In addition to assigned articles and text reading, it is imperative that you have a familiarity and understanding of the latest industry news. An easy way to do this is to routinely check industry trade sights and blogs (Variety, Hollywood Reporter, Deadline Hollywood, etc.).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (February 8)
Key Topics:
- Introduction
- Curriculum review, course objectives and course project deliverables
- Brief history of the film industry and film marketing
- Current players and trends in the film industry
- Marketing overview / the marketing plan
- The verticals of the film business
  - Major decision points
  - Internal vs. external decisions
  - Marketing / producing partners
- Studio system vs. independents
- The marketer’s toolbox
- The good, the bad and the ugly: discuss notable marketing successes and flops
- Form project groups

Assignment
Come to class with a film or type of film that you are passionate about. We will use these to find individuals who share your interests to form a team with you.

Week 2 (February 15)
The Product
- How to select the right project
- Setting financial and creative goals
- Talent pedigree and marketability (using pop polls, etc.)
- Market sizing
- Marketing budgets
  - Determining ultimates
  - Breaking down P&A
  - Understanding cash flow
- Balancing a production portfolio
- Using market research to gauge playability and understand your audience

Speaker: Market research moderator

Week 3 (February 22)
Messaging
- Positioning the film
- Target audience
- Media plan development (TV, Radio, Print, Online, Stunting)
- Added value media assets
- Publicity
  - National vs. regional
  - Reviews vs. items vs. features
- New avenues of outreach
- New challenges

Speaker: Film publicist / media planner
Week 4 (March 1)
The Creative Process & Awards Campaigning
- Trailers and TV spots
- Poster
- Print / outdoor creative
- Online creative
- Getting materials in theaters (film vs. venue)
- Market research – the materials testing process
- Awards outreach and campaigning

Speaker: Trailer producer

Week 5 (March 8)
Distribution & Ancillaries
- Understanding release dates and release patterns
- In-theater distribution and box office settlements
- Exhibition
  - Chains vs. Independents
  - Trailer placement
  - Digital vs. analogue (whose budget?)
  - Refreshments / “project pictures”
- Product placement
- Retail partners
- VOD distribution and marketing
- DTV options and marketing
- Music / Soundtracks / Licensing
- New ancillaries
- The MPAA’s CARA system

No class March 15

Week 6 (March 22)
Team Presentations