

## **Instructions for My Big Comic Book Idea! (May also potentially be substituted for other Arts, Business, Trade, or other Creative Subjects where Instructor has Background**

This assignment occurs as the capstone project for an eight-week comic book course designed to get students thinking about applicability of issues to their own role in business, organizational leadership, and communication.

My own background: As a kid, my brother gave me comic books to help me with my struggles to read. It worked. Today, I have a 20,000+ collection spanning 80 years of diverse character creativity, hard-earned work of artists and writers, and common leadership lessons that present multi-disciplinary takeaways. While this class is comic book industry specific, many other subjects drawing from the arts, business, trades, or other creative subjects I can't conceive could be substituted. Example: a good way to learn about marketing oneself, working with others in a team, and having your ideas accepted or rejected by others can be found in the recording industry.

I use this knowledge of the comic book industry to teach my students in a hot topic course while using lessons from an industry they've often only seen in movies or video games. We specifically focus in on examples from the comic book industry that demonstrate lessons-learned from creator rights, issues around representation and inclusion, and the creative process. Following this, students are invited to provide their own comic idea in the form of this Capstone.

Instructions are as follows:

1. Participants should think exhaustively about what they think should be different in the comic book industry and what they want to create. I tell them there is no limit to what they might propose to create.
2. I ask them to think back to experiences this semester learning about the comic book industry and our range of topics: characters, creators, publishers, movies, conventions, cosplay, etc. Then answer the following:
  - a. What area(s) capture their creative interest?
  - b. What has the industry not quite figured out via changing audiences, issues of diversity, inclusion, representation, and creator rights?
  - c. Can they think of a character, series, movie, product, attraction, destination, or something else we've not considered? \*These projects often take the form of something that not even I have considered.
3. Once participants have an idea, they should prepare a proposal offering the specific "selling" details and timeline for the project, including how it will be delivered to readers, viewers, or consumers.
4. They should discuss potential buyers or investors for the idea, financial considerations for getting started, and whether your idea already has competitors. Marketing and advertising considerations are a plus in this proposal.

5. In class, the capstone project will be delivered through a presentation and deliverable of a Word Document, storyboard, slide deck, or video that helps illustrate their Big Comic Book Idea. Please note that artists can use art, graphic designers graphic design, writers use writing, actors using acting, and presenters can present. As long as there is a deliverable, we are flexible for the in-class portion of the project which can last any length of time, but we use 2-5 minutes.
6. If participants are considering audience members and reacting to them appropriately, there are no right or wrong answers to the projects we offer.

### References

Rucker, L., & Shapiro, J. (2003). Becoming a physician: students' creative projects in a third-year IM clerkship. *Academic Medicine*, 78(4), 391-397.

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Shapiro, J., Nguyen, V., Mourra, S., Ross, M., Thai, T., & Leonard, R. (2006). The Use of Creative Projects in a Gross Anatomy Class. *Journal for Learning through the Arts*, 2(1), 20.