Derek O'Leary
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Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

M.A. in Advertising (Art Direction), May 2011- VCU Brandcenter
B.A. in Advertising, June 2008- Michigan State University

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Robertson School of Commincation at VCU (Fall 2020-Present)
Assistant Professor

HONORS/AWARDS

Lift Award (2023) VCU College of Humanities Arts and Sciences *Enriching MASC 383: User Experience - Unveiling a Toolkit for Enhanced Experiential Learning*

Promising Professor Award (2023) Mass Communication and Society (A division of the *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*)

PRSA Richmond's Award of Excellence for Capital: External Video Program (2021)
Co-Creator and Producer of *Virginia Lottery's Friday Funday Social Media Program*

Most Valuable Professor (2021) Selected by the VCU Women's Volleyball team for being the team captain's "most impactful professor."

PRSA Richmond's Capital Best in Show Award & Award of Excellence for Paid Social Media (2018)

Third Place in Red Bull's National Flugtag Competition (2013)

Oscar Mayer's Hot Dogger Challenger Winner (2009)

Michigan State College of Communication Arts & Sciences Dean's List (Fall & Spring 2006, Fall & Spring 2007)

Selected as Shaheen Chevrolet's campaign of choice for the MSU Advertising Campaign Agency competition (2008)

College of Communications Arts & Sciences Endowed Scholarship (2007)

National Broadcasters Association Internship Scholarship (2005 & 2006)

National Association of Recording Merchandisers Platinum Scholarship (2004)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Virginia Lottery
Experiential Marketing Specialist (2019-2020)

- Strategist and manager of the industry's first mobile app for the Virginia Lottery and Keno launch
- Supervised and coordinated over 150 Lottery branded events in a year period
- Creative director for Virginia Lottery's partners and internal creative team on video, advertising and marketing projects.

O'Fung Studios
Co-Owner (2018-Present)

- Create illustrations based on culture with a lean towards local Richmond culture and beer. Work has been shown and sold in local Richmond businesses (Brick+Mortar) and Etsy.
- Commissioned for illustration and design work from music artists and festivals
- Previously Experiential Events contractor for the Virginia Lottery and manager of the spokesperson, Game Guy

Storywerks
Director Of Amusements (2016-2018)

- Produced, designed and managed Virginia Lottery's new consumer event activations and sponsorships
- Managed appearances of spokesperson Game Guy and his revamped social pages
- Designed and managed Virginia Lottery sports partnerships including promotions, in-stadium activations and arena signage.
- Developed and implemented digital campaigns, Game Guy's Holiday Dash and Frogger ticket.

Barber Martin Advertising (Now renamed "Yebo")
Event Manager/ Event Producer (2014-2016)

- Working on Virginia Lottery and their spokesperson, Game Guy to create memorable engaging one-on-one experiences with consumer segments at events and sponsorships
- Advanced Game Guy's social media content

Big River Advertising
Gameologist/ Event Manager (2012-2014)

- Worked to develop the spokesperson, Game Guy for the Virginia Lottery as part of the brand's re-launch campaign
- Created and managed Game Guy's social channels

· Researched and designed events with a small marketing budget, including the use of Guerilla marketing tactics
· Implemented expanding events team with brand ambassadors

Oscar Mayer
"Hot Dogger" Brand Ambassador (2008-2009)
· Created and executed hundreds of on-site events across the country for the Wienermobile
· Represented the company in local and national media outlets
· Asked to represent the company with a high-profile tour in Hawaii for the first time in 18 years

The State News
Senior Account Manager (2006-2008)
· Created sales plans that clients adopted as an advertising strategy
· Contributed to cross-platform sales of over $ 2 million annually for the nation's largest collegiate newspaper

95.5 FM WBRU
Supervisor and Intern Coordinator (2005-2006)
· Supervised 32 interns over two summers for various radio station's promotions

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses taught at Robertson School of Communication at VCU
MASC 204 *Story* (FA 2022, SP 2023, SP 2024, SP 2025, SP 2026)
MASC 312 Creativity with AI (FA 2025, SP 2026
MASC 383 *User Experience* (FA 2023, SP 2024, FA 2024, SP 2025, FA 2025, SP 2026)
MASC 399 *Empathy* (FA 2020, SP 2021, FA 2021)
MASC 450 *Style* (FA 2020, SP 2021, FA 2021, SP 2022, FA 2022, SP 2023, FA 2023, SP 2024, FA 2024, SP 2025)
MASC 451 *Invention* (SP 2021, FA 2021, SP 2022, FA 2022, SP 2023, FA 2023, SP 2024, FA2024)
MASC 459 *Judgment* (FA 2020 [two sections], SP 2021, SP 2022, FA 2022)
MASC 481 *Completeness* (FA 2021, SP 2022, FA 2022, SP 2023, FA 2023, FA 2024, SP 2025, FA 2025)

Teaching Assistant at Michigan State University
Professor Emeritus Bruce Vanden Bergh's "The Creative Process" class (FA2007, SP2008)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant at Michigan State University
Assisted with Professor Emeritus Bruce Vanden Bergh's research study of using metaphors in creative advertising

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

2025 AI for Creative Work, Specialization, University of Michigan
2025 Practical AI for UX Professionals, Certification, Neilson Norman Group (NNg)
2022 Introduction to Design Thinking, Digital Badge, VCU's DaVinci Center

TRAVEL/ EXPOSURE TO CULTURE EXPERIENCES

Studied Abroad in China and Japan in Advertising (2006)

ASSESSMENT

Judge for VCU's Student Advertising Awards aka "The RAMMYs" (2022, 2023)
Judged 18 categories and over 150 entries for the student advertising awards presented by the VCU Ad Club.

Judge for Robertson Rush (2021)
Provided creative feedback and judged work for 10 groups of students on their final projects.

Judge for Camp Adventure (2020)
Provided creative feedback and judged work for 8 "bunks" of students' final projects

Reviewer for Fall 2019 Robertson School Portfolio Showcase

PRESENTATIONS

Guest on *"Limed: Teaching with a Twist"* podcast from Elon's Center for Engaged Learning. August 2022, posted September 2023 Topic: *Opportunities to Make Group Work Authentic*

Guest Speaker for Peyton Rowe's Imagination PR (MASC 394) Spring 2022 and Fall 2022 Topic: *Everything All At Once: Integrated Campaigns*

Guest Speaker for the VCU Honor College's Berglund Seminar (Spring 2021) Topic: *Experiential Advertising*

Guest Speaker for Kaitlin Hanger's Multimedia Design for PR (MASC 335) Fall 2020 Topic: *Experiential Advertising*

Guest Speaker for Lisa Dance's Brand Experiences class (Spring 2016) Topic: *Experiential Advertising*

Speaker for Robertson School of Culture at VCU Research Roundtable (Fall 2020) Topic: *The Engagement Barrier*

Virginia Lottery "Game Shows"

Created and produced 15 unique hour-long “game shows” and 40 fifteen-minute “game shows for specialized audiences at Comic Conventions, Beer festivals and Music festivals.

AWARDS WON BY STUDENTS WITH WORK CREATED IN MY COURSES

2025, Gold, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, App, Client: National Museum of Women in the Arts, Art Direction: Erin Crawford, and Copywriting: Journee’ Harris

2025, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Non-Traditional Campaign, Client: Girl’s State, Art Direction: Suhylah and Copywriting: Mia Moleno

2024, Gold and Best in Show, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Television Campaign, Client: Marco’s Pizza, Art Direction: Beth Leblanc, and Copywriting: Kate McGree

2024, Gold, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Consumer Intergrated Campaign, Client: Hot Topic, Art Direction & Copywriting: Rachel Spiller

2024, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Social Media, Client: Virgin Atlantic Airlines, Art Direction & Copywriting: Rachel King

2024, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, App, Client: PETA, Art Direction: Brandon Matos, Art Direction: Javier Ayala and Copywriting: Rhys Wade

2024, Bronze, Richmond Advertising Club’s Ad Show Awards, Student Category, “The Virginia Quilt Museum”; Art Director: Kayani Jaramillo; Copywriter: Marilyn Baker

2023, Silver, Richmond Advertising Club’s Ad Show Awards, Student Category, “The Work in Progress Museum” Client: Torpedo Art Factory; Art Director: Erika Corchado; Copywriter: Llambo Pali;

2023, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Illustration, Client: Topo Chico, Art Direction: Daniel Thompson, Art Direction & Copywriting: Sarah Stork

2023, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club’s Young One’s Brief Competition, Client: Spotify Art Director: Erika Corchado; Art Director/Editor: Avery Martin, Copywriter: Bria Files

2022, Bronze, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "Tame the Mess" Client: Black & Decker; Art Director: Madison Hewlett

2022, Bronze, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "#LetsTalk" Client: WhatsApp; Art Director, Graphic Designer, Producer: Emma Hultgren, Copywriter: Kaitlyn Harrison

2022, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Magazine Campaign, Client: Con-Air, Art Direction: Anna Duma, Copywriting: Mia Dickerson

2022, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, App, Client: Con-Air, Brand: Books-A-Millions' Thirsty App, Art Direction: Kaeleb Cielo, Art Direction: Wynter Cannatelli, Copywriting: Ben Koch

2022, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Ambient Media (Guerilla Marketing) Single Occurrence or Installation, Client: Five Below, Art Direction: Nhan La, Copywriting: Reese Pope

2022, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Client: Bang & Olufsen; Art Director: Malcolm Simien; Art Director/Editor: Sofia Mofhadaszadeh-Ahrabi, Art Director: Madison Hewlett

2022, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Client: Call of Duty; Art Director: Emily Heer; Copywriter: Hayden Taylor

2022, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Client: Door Dash; Art Director: Samantha Judd; Copywriter: Sammi Ferguson; Copywriter: Jalyn Reid

2022, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Client: Call of Duty; Art Director: Lorallye Partlow; Art Director: Grace Toulon Art Director: Prince Deven Thomas

2022, Shortlist, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Client: Bang & Olufson; Art Director: Nhan La; Copywriter: Alexandra Carrilo; Art Director: Alyna Draper

2021, Gold, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Out-Of-Home & Ambient Media Campaign, Client: Women's Made Gallery; Art Direction: Sydney Crockett; Art Direction: Michael Smith

2021, Gold, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Richmond Region, Out-Of-Home & Ambient Media Campaign, Client: Sunglass Hut; Art Direction: Sydney Crockett; Art Direction: Alec Nguyen

2021, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Hampton Roads/Richmond Region, Magazine Advertising – Print Single, Client: Heinz Mix-Ups; Art Direction: Alyna Draper; Copywriter: Page Ryland

2021, Silver, American Advertising Federation Local ADDY Awards, Richmond Region, Out-Of-Home & Ambient Media Campaign, Client: Yankee Candle; Art Direction: Jena Wirsch; Copywriter: Carson Nunnally

2021, Silver, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "The Daily Ride" Client: Spotify; Copywriter/Editor: Kofi Roberts

2021, Silver, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "Pop-Up Play" Client: Spotify; Art Director: Jena Wirsch

2021, Silver, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "#MEETMYBUD" Client: Budweiser; Art Director: Jena Wirsch; Copywriting: Kofi Roberts

2021, Bronze, Richmond Advertising Club's Ad Show Awards, Student Category, "The Bud Bank" Client: Budweiser; Art Director: Kyle Talley; Art Director: Grant Studenhofer

2021, Bronze, National Competition: The One Club's Young One's Brief Competition, Experiential Category, "The Daily Ride" Client: Spotify; Copywriter/Editor: Kofi Roberts

COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIPS

2024-Present, Chair, Branding and Outreach Committee
2025-Present, Social Media Liason, Robertson School Social Channels
2025-Present, Web Liason, Robertson School Website
2021-2024, Co-Chair, Assessment and Accreditation Committee
2023-2024, Member, Reaccrediation Task Force

- The college was approved for Reaccreditation

2022-2023, Member, Personnel Committee
2021-2022, Member, The Media Innovation Lab Task Force
2020-2021, Member, The Graduate Studies Committee
2020-2021, Member, Facilities + Tech Committee
2020, Member, Media Production Sequence Task Force

Service-Learning Partnerships

481: Completeness

2025: Richmond Triangle Players and Theater, Ghost Wolf Pepper Co., The Virginia Home
2024: Worthen Furniture (formerly Virginia Brass Beds), Virginia Capital Trail Foundation

2023: Pumpkin for Pigs, artspace:Richmond, Left Turn Cafe, Blue Sky Fund
2022: Capsoul Brewing, CancerLinc, DriveElectric RVA, Hatch Kitchen
2021: IT4causes, De Kabeza (DKBZ)

451: Invention
2022: Hatch Kitchen, 1115 Mobile Kitchen, A Secret Forest, Fries in Disguise, Ryba's Pierogis

459 Judgment
2022: Eat. Smart.

OTHER DEPARTMENT SERVICE ACTIVITIES

2022-Present, Lead, VCU Robertson School Advertising Virtual Mentorship Day. Held SP 2022, FA 2022, SP 2023, FA 2024, SP 2025, FA 2025
Created mentor meetings between 200+ students and professionals

2021, Lead, Pre-Folio Event Speaker Series

2020-Present, Co-Lead, VCU Robertson School Advertising, and Portfolio Show. Held FA 2020, SP 2021, FA 2021, SP 2022, FA 2022, SP 2023, FA 2024, SP 2025, FA 2025

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Novi Co-Op Preschool
Member Services Coordinator (2024-2025)
Coordinating with families to find out information about the school, processing applications, and enrollment. Working with the state of Michigan and nationally for background checks.

Boston Terrier Rescue of East Tennessee
Foster dogs to be adopted into good homes and creating fundraiser materials (2017-Present)

Re: Establish Richmond
English Mentor (2018-2020)
Working with a family from Egypt to improve their English skills for working in the Richmond area.

SKILLS

Social Media Manager, Experiential Marketing, User Experience, Art Direction, Media Relations and Video Editing and Production.

Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, InDesign, Dreamweaver, Aero, Dimension and Premier), Figma, Kaltura, HTML, CSS, Arduino, Blender, Raspberry Pi and VR.

Memberships

User Experience Professional Association International

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Home Renovation enthusiast (construction, plumbing and electrical), Reddit Moderator, Dog Agility Competitor, Pokemon TCG, Price is Right contestant