Southern California has a new ad school.

L.A.’s Loyola Marymount University has partnered with non-profit ad club thinkLA to launch The Institute of Modern Marketing, also known as the mSchool.

The school is launching with a 14-week pilot course that starts today, called "The Future Will Not Be Televised: The New World of Branding and Advertising.” It promises a unique approach from other ad programs, with a focus on digital training, designed to prep next-gen ad talent to hit the ground running and shorten the job training cycle.

The school will partner with both agencies and tech companies in the region, including Google, Facebook and local video game studios to tailor course content. For example, a session on Google analytics could be held at a Google office, and led by someone from the company. Or if that week’s session is about social media, Facebook would be pulled in, said Andy Rohm, an associate professor of marketing at LMU. The course will also focus on the nuts and bolts of digital advertising, including SEO, social media and interactive skills. The students will also help set up mSchool’s web and social media presence.

Students will be regularly taken out of the classroom, spending half their time at L.A. agencies, media companies and marketers, said Ignited president Eric Johnson, one of the school’s instructors and co-president of thinkLA. “This will provide real-life content, and also help pave the way for internships,” he said.

Other instructors will include veteran ad talents, like Deutsch L.A. partner and chief digital officer Winston Binch and TBWA/Chiat/Day L.A. ECD Patrick O’Neill. About 20 students were selected from the LMU undergraduate body to take part in the inaugural course, which will count towards their overall degree.

“One unique component of the program is that we are tapping into our undergraduate student body,” said Mr. Rohm. Most ad schools don’t do that, preferring to focus on graduate-level students or higher. "We want to capture the 21- and 22-year-olds,” he added.

Perhaps more important, “we are trying to address a fundamental problem of the marketing world,” said Mr. Johnson. “The world is changing and academic institutions haven’t been able to keep delivering a steady supply of talent that can feed agencies and brands.”

The eventual plan is to expand the mSchool into a two-year course next fall, offered to undergraduates. Plans for a graduate degree and an executive program are also underway, with students eventually graduating with a degree in modern marketing.