

Loyola University
School of Communication
Communication 318-21W Syllabus: Public Relations Writing
Fall Semester 2014

Class dates: Mondays; Monday, August 25 to Monday, December 1

Time: 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Location: School of Communication, Room 003, WTC

Instructor: John Brooks

Office hours: Mondays, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., or by appointment

Office location: TBD

Loyola University email: jbrooks9@luc.edu

Mobile phone: (847) 894-4529

Required Text:

Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising and More (3rd edition). Charles Marsh, David W. Guth, Boonie Poovey Short. Pearson Education, Inc., 2012. ISBN 13: 978-0-205-03197-9.

The Associated Press Stylebook 2014 (Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law). By the Associated Press. ISBN-13: 978-0-917360-58-9.

There may be additional reading for classroom discussion. Sources for discussions are from public relations and business-oriented newsletters and publications which your instructor reads regularly. These include e-mail newsletters such as Ragan's Daily Headlines, PR Daily Newsfeed, Bulldog Reporter's Daily Dog and PRSA Issues and Trends; and publications such as the *Chicago Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*, *PR Week*, *PR Tactics*, and *Public Relations Strategist*.

Course Description and Student Learning Outcomes:

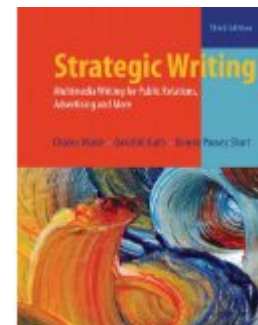
This is writing-intensive class. This course focuses on strategic public relations, writing for publics including print, broadcast and digital media with understanding of objectives, news values and formats. The desired outcome of this course is that you develop competency writing and editing such things as news releases, pitch letters, fact sheets, public service announcements, newsletters, Web content, etc., to develop a portfolio of individual writing samples.

Class Attendance Policy:

- You are expected to make every effort to attend every class because success in this course depends on regular attendance and interaction with the class and instructor.

Please note:

- Classes will begin promptly at 7 p.m.
- Attendance will be monitored by a sign-in sheet
- If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to attend class and have a legitimate excuse, please inform the instructor by email



- Acceptable excuses for missing class include illness, family emergency, student-athlete commitments or court date. (Work conflicts are *not* acceptable excuses) Please provide evidence to document excused absences to the instructor.
- If you are absent, you are still required to turn in assignments by the due date and time
- You will earn points for attendance and in-class assignments

Course requirements:

Grades for this course will be determined by these factors:

- Attendance
- Writing assignments in class and outside of class
- Midterm exam
- Final exam
- Class participation

Choosing an organization or company

For writing purposes, each student in the class must choose a company or organization that will serve as the basis for nearly all writing assignments for this class. It is important to choose a company or organization familiar to you or is well known enough so that you can research its products, policies and initiatives. You will need to identify a company or organization at the beginning of the course. From what you know or from researching the company, you should be able to write broadcast scripts, news releases, media advisories, speeches, Web and social media content, magazine articles, advertising content, and letters.

Attendance: 26 points

You will receive 2 points for each class session you attend. If you are late for class, you will receive 1 point, and no points for classes missed without an appropriate excuse.

Graded assignments: 169 points (13 x 13 points each)

There will be a regular, graded written assignments based on class discussion and readings in the text. You will turn in assignments through the Sakai dropbox by assigned deadlines. Your instructor will review written assignments, comment and return to you via the dropbox. It is important that your writing reflect an understanding of different types of public relations communications and AP style, including proper use of words, correct forms of words and numbers, spelling, good grammar and correct flow and structure. You should *always* consult the AP Stylebook regularly when writing.

Assignments submitted late are not accepted.

In-class assignments: 10 points

There will be some in-class assignments to practice research and writing. These assignments will not be graded, but you will receive points for completing the assignments and turning them in to the instructor. The instructor will review these in-class assignments and provide feedback to you.

Midterm: 35 points

A midterm exam, based on class discussions and writing assignments will be due October 2. ***Late exams are not accepted.***

Final exam: 50 points

The final exam will test your ability to conduct research, and write clearly and accurately. The final exam is due in the dropbox no later than 9:30 p.m., December 8. ***Late exams are not accepted.***

Class participation: 10 points

Class participation matters in this class, just as participating and speaking up matter in the public relations business. Silence is *not* an option in this class or in public relations. Your instructor asks questions in class, and invites comment and discussion. Your instructor wants to hear your ideas, questions, opinions and points of view. It is important to come to class prepared by keeping up with readings and the news. Discussion and debate are ways of assuring your understanding of the subject, and it will contribute to your knowledge.

Meetings with the instructor

Your instructor wants to meet you, and learn about your hopes and dreams for careers in public relations/communication. Times for individual meetings will be before and after class. ***Meetings are optional, but I strongly encourage your participation.*** We can discuss career and internship possibilities, your progress in the class, or other related topics.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit;

- or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

A complete description of the School of Communication Academic Integrity Policy can be found at <http://www.luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml>

Preliminary Class Schedule:

The following is a working schedule (subject to change) of how we will review the textbook and other supplemental readings. Classes will consist of a mix of lectures, Q&A, and plenty of writing.

August 25

Introductions

Course outline, assignments, grading

Choosing an organization/company for your writing assignments (**due August 28**)

#1 Student writing assignment (due August 28)

#2 News release (due September 4)

Reading: pgs. 1-10

Reading: pgs. 43-51

September 1

No class – Labor Day

September 8

Review of writing assignments

#3 Writing for the Web/social media, IMC (due September 11)

Reading: pgs. 18-25

September 15

Review of writing assignments

Diversity, Ethics & Persuasion

#4 Blog post (due September 18)

Reading: pgs. 26-33; pgs. 105-111

September 22

Review of writing assignments

#5 Media advisories, pitches (due September 25)

Reading: pgs. 62-69

September 29

Review of writing assignments

Midterm exam (due October 2)

#6 Speech writing (due October 9)

Reading: p. 32-33, 99-104

October 6

No class, mid-semester break

October 13

Review of midterm exam, writing assignments

#7 Magazine writing (due October 16)

Reading: pgs. 87-98

October 20

Review of writing assignments

#8 Broadcast writing (Radio) (due October 23)

Reading: pgs. 11-16, 139-143, 154-164

October 27

Review of writing assignments

#9 Broadcast writing (TV) (due October 30)

Reading: pgs. 11-16, 144-150, 154-164

November 3

Review of writing assignments

#10 Advertising writing/letters (due November 6)

Reading: pgs. 121-138, 177-186

November 10

Review of writing assignments

#11 Strategic messaging: PR goals, objectives, strategies (due November 13)

Reading: pgs. 121-129

November 17

Review of writing assignments

#12 Business reports, memos (due November 20)

Reading: pgs. 225-233

November 24

Review of writing assignments

#13 Job letters/resumes (due December 1, in class)

Reading: pgs. 216-221

December 1

Job letters/resumes

Writing review, final exam preparation

Final Exam: due Monday, December 8, 9:30 p.m.

Final Grades & Point Totals

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|----|---------|----|---------|----|-----------|
| A | 280-300 | B- | 240-249 | D+ | 200-209 |
| A- | 270-279 | C+ | 230-239 | D | 190-199 |
| B+ | 260-269 | C | 220-229 | D- | 180-189 |
| B | 250-259 | C- | 210-219 | F | Below 180 |