

COMM 413
Writing for Strategic Communication, Fall 2019
Wednesdays, 7 – 9:30 p.m., Corboy Law Center Room 201

Cheryl McPhilimy
School of Communication
111 E. Pearson Street, room 911E
cmphil@luc.edu

By appointment -- afternoons or before class

Course Description:

Being a strong and versatile writer provides an essential edge in a career in communication. This advanced, writing-intensive course engages students in the strategic process of professional-level writing by focusing on communication objectives, techniques, style and mechanics. Students will learn the importance of planning, research, pre-writing, editing and rewriting in the writing process. The course provides practical, real-world writing experience in diverse formats for a range of audiences.

Objectives

- Learn to write more effectively.
- Strengthen critical and creative thinking abilities.
- Gain familiarity with effective writing for public relations, journalism, advertising and digital communication.
- Develop acumen in punctuation, grammar and Associated Press Style rules and usage.
- Feel more prepared for writing tests required by employers in communication fields.

Required Texts:

Associated Press. (2019). *The Associated Press Stylebook 2019 and Briefing on Media Law*. The Associated Press. ISBN 978-0-917360-68-8. You can purchase with or without the media law briefing. Alternatively, you can purchase an online subscription to the Associated Press Stylebook.

Important note: our other materials are hosted on Perusall.com. Login with the course code: MCPHILIMY-3BZ2L. Do not purchase these texts elsewhere as you will be unable to use the annotation feature. For the Marsh text, get the 180-day access.

Handley, A. (2014). *Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Marsh, C., Guth, D.W., Short, B. (2018). *Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising and More, 4th Edition*. New York: Routledge.

Roberts, Jasmine. (2016). *Writing for Strategic Communication Industries*. The Ohio State University. On Perusall or at <https://osu.pb.unizin.org/stratcommwriting/>

Required Text:

Additional readings will also be required and these will either be handed out or posted on Sakai.

Expectations:

Students and the instructor are expected to:

- Fully participate.
- Be professional.

- Be courteous. Be attentive and pleasant to any outside speaker. Respect other students and the instructor. Turn off cell phones, laptops and other devices and be ready when class begins. Give yourself a break from the electronic tether and use technology only when part of an in-class exercise. Hold side conversations outside the classroom.

Each semester hour of class time entails approximately two hours each week of outside preparation for the average student. This means that in a three-semester-hour course like this one, students should expect to spend six additional hours of outside work per week.

Students are expected to demonstrate greater proficiency in writing, critical thinking and style as the course progresses. Writing mechanics and Associated Press Style are factors in the grading criteria.

Should a student miss a class for any reason, it is the student’s responsibility to contact another student to obtain notes and to find out what was covered. Attendance is recommended.

Class Components

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
1. Word Power Presentations	5 (2 @ 2.5 points each)
2. Annotations	30 (10 @ 3 points each week assigned)
3. AP Style Self Challenges	10 (2 @ 5 points each)
4. Assignments	45 (9 @ 5 points each)
5. <u>In-Class Workplace Writing Test</u>	10
<hr/>	
Total	100

Word Power Presentations

Each member of the class will make two short (3 minute) presentations about the effectiveness of a specific line of copy (one to 10 words in length). On the first day of class, you will have the opportunity to sign up for dates. On your assigned evening, be prepared to bring the example you’ve chosen onto the screen. You’ll then explain what it is, who the audience is, why/how it works, and what is particularly effective about it. Examine word choice, structure and impact. The example can be any length from one to 10 words and can be an excerpt. It must be strategic, professionally written copy and can be a headline, ad copy, a line from a speech, etc.

Perusall Annotations on the Text:

This course accesses the Marsh and Handley books via the Perusall website, perusall.com. Perusall is a tool that lets students comment directly on the text and interact with class peers about the material. Most weeks, there is an annotation assignment due on Wednesday by 7 p.m. Read and annotate (make thoughtful comments on) the assigned reading in Perusall. Late annotations will not receive full credit.

AP Style Challenges:

Associated Press (AP) Style is the generally accepted style of journalists, public relations practitioners and many other business communicators. It provides common standards for usage, grammar, spelling and punctuation. A working knowledge of AP Style is essential for the communications professional who wants to make sure messages are received by media and other target audiences. There are two AP Style challenges due during the course. They are accessible on the Tests and Quizzes tab on Sakai. The challenges are timed; once you start, you have just 10 minutes to answer 20 questions, which are drawn from a pool. You may use your AP Stylebook and you may take the AP Style challenges as many times as you’d like before the due date. A good strategy is to take the AP Style challenge – and keep taking it – until you’ve achieved mastery and have a score you like.

Writing Assignments

Assignments are due by 7 p.m. on the due date, submitted electronically via Sakai. Details about the assignments are distributed in class or posted on Sakai. Keep your own copy of everything you turn in. Assignments turned in on time will receive more extensive feedback and are eligible for editing and resubmission. Late assignments are not.

Workplace Writing Test

On the final evening of the course, we will take an employer's writing test that includes elements of style and grammar as well as strategic thinking and composing a document.

Course Schedule:

Week Date Topic

1. Aug. 28 Defining Strategic Communication, Message and Medium, Global Brands

2. Sep. 4 News, Public Relations
 - Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – Foreword, About, What's New, Punctuation
 - Handley – see Perusall for each week's assignment
 - Marsh – see Perusall for each week's assignment
 - Roberts – see Perusall for each week's assignment
 - Due:
 - Global brand communication audit assignment

3. Sep. 11 Pitches
 - Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – A
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Roberts
 - Due:
 - News release assignment

4. Sep. 18 Publics, Audiences
 - Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – B-C
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Roberts
 - <http://www.strategicbusinessinsights.com/vals/ustypes.shtml>
 - Due:
 - Pitch assignment

5. Sep. 25 Creative Brief – Guest, Jackie Horn, Kodak Alaris, Director of Worldwide Marketing
 - Due:
 - AP Style Self Challenge 1 – take on Sakai in Tests & Quizzes section
 - Reading:
 - Materials to be provided in advance from speaker

6. Oct. 2 Advertising Copy
 - Reading:

- AP Stylebook – D-E
 - Handley
 - Roberts
 - Due:
 - Creative brief assignment
7. Oct. 9 Radio/Podcast Advertising
- Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – F-I
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Due:
 - Ad copy assignment
8. Oct. 16 Macro and Micro Editing, Digital
- Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – J-M
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Roberts
 - Due:
 - Radio ad assignment
9. Oct. 23 Strategic Plans
- Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – N-O
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Due:
 - Digital copy assignment
10. Oct. 30 Crisis Communication, Customers
- Due:
 - AP Style Self Challenge 2 – take on Sakai in Tests & Quizzes section
11. Nov. 6 Speeches
- Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – P-S
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Due:
 - Customer letter assignment
12. Nov. 13 Business Writing, Cover Letters
- Reading:
 - AP Stylebook – T-Z
 - Handley
 - Marsh
 - Due:
 - Speech assignment
13. Nov. 20 Self Promotion – Resume, LinkedIn

- Reading:
 - Handley
 - Roberts
- Due:
 - Cover letter assignment

Nov. 27 – no class THANKSGIVING BREAK

14. Dec. 4 In-Class Agency Writing Test – timed, open AP Stylebook

Note: this syllabus is subject to change. Keep an eye on Sakai where the official syllabus is posted and attend class to stay aware of updates.

Grade Scale:

A: 100-94 points	C: 77.9-73 points
A-: 93.9-90 points	C-: 72.9-70 points
B+: 89.9-88 points	D+: 69.9-68 points
B: 87.9-83 points	D: 67.9-63 points
B-: 82.9-80 points	D-: 62.9-60 points
C+ 79.9-78 points	F: 59.9-0 points

Assignment Grading: Course assignments and exams will be reviewed with the following in mind:

A = Outstanding. This grade is for work of professional or near professional quality. The writing is clear and well-organized. It is complete and leaves no significant questions unanswered. It is well-executed with comprehensive research, strong presentation and nearly flawless writing.

B = Good. This grade is for work that could be raised to professional standards without extensive editing. The writing reflects competence but may lack the polish and fine organization of "A" work. The work answers the main questions but may miss the proper emphasis or the best sources. It may need minor revisions in such areas as reorganizing, rewriting, reformatting or providing more or better sources.

C = Adequate/Fair. This grade is for work that indicates a problem in at least one area, such as grammar, content or strategy. It does not measure up to professional quality. It may be hard to follow or vague. The work is first draft and wouldn't be considered ready to show a client or supervisor.

D = Unsatisfactory. This grade is for work that is unacceptable even in a classroom setting. The writing is confused and/or ungrammatical. The work is flawed and may contain major factual errors and/or omissions or may show little concept of basic strategic judgment.

Assignments may be analyzed by Turnitin.

Loyola School of Communication Academic Integrity Statement:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. 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. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. 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.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml. The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

Intellectual Property:

All lectures, notes, PowerPoints, Prezis and other instructional materials in this course are the intellectual property of the professor. As a result, they may not be distributed or shared in any manner, either on paper or virtually without the instructor's written permission. Lectures may not be recorded without the instructor's written consent; when consent is given, those recordings may be used for review only and may not be distributed. Recognizing that your work, too, is your intellectual property, the instructor will not share or distribute your work in any form without your written permission.

Class Conduct:

One important aspect of a Jesuit education is learning to respect the rights and opinions of others. Please respect others by (1) allowing all classmates the right to voice their opinions without fear of ridicule, and (2) not making objectionable (gendered, racial or ethnic) comments, especially comments directed at a classmate or guest.

Special Circumstances--Receiving Assistance:

If you require assignment accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) (<http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>).

Student Support Resources:

- ITS Service Desk
 - helpdesk@luc.edu or itsservicedesk@luc.edu
 - 773-508-4487
- Library
 - Subject Specialists: <http://libraries.luc.edu/specialists>
- Students Accessibility Center – support for students with disabilities
 - <http://www.luc.edu/sac>
- School of Communication Writing Center. Write on!

- www.socwritingcenter.slack.com
- University Writing Center
 - <http://www.luc.edu/writing/>