

COMM 3061. PR Writing & Planning

Instructor: Dr. Bette J. Kauffman
Phone: 342-1400

Office: 111 Stubbs
kauffman@ulm.edu

Office Hours:

Course Prerequisite: MCOM 2010 – No exceptions.

Course Description: This course is a survey of the forms of writing routinely done by PR practitioners and other professionals in the field of mass communications. It builds on the introductory content mastered in Writing for Professional Communicators. Since writing is a daily activity of PR professionals, often under unreasonable deadlines, we will use some class time to write. The basic skills of writing, specifically spelling, grammar, word choice, punctuation, organization and so forth, will ALWAYS be part of grading.

In addition to my evaluations, students will also critique each other's work. This too is real world experience. PR writers can never afford "attitude" about being critiqued and edited by others. Too much is at stake in PR writing for anyone's work to ever go to publication without more than one review by more than one person. We will also practice the fine and necessary disciplines of reviewing, revising, editing and proofreading.

Course Objectives/Outcomes: At the completion of this course, students should:

- Be better writers.
- Be familiar with and able to produce credible versions of all the different styles and formats of PR writing.
- Have quality written items for possible inclusion in their senior learning portfolio.

Required Textbooks:

Wilcox, Dennis L. 2013. *Public Relations Writing & Media Techniques*, Seventh Edition. Allyn & Bacon.

AP Stylebook, no more than two years old.

Instructional Methods/Activities:

This course is a combination of lectures, discussions and in-class writing activities and critiques. Attendance, preparation and participation are required. Once class has begun, computers are to be used only for class related activities. Other activities visible on computer screens, such as Facebook and e-mail will result in points deducted from class participation, and it is possible to achieve a negative balance.

Evaluation/Grade Assignment:

Writing assignments	60%
Exams	30%
Class Participation	10%

Exams will be administered on Moodle using the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Each will cover several textbook chapters and related lectures. The instructor reserves the right to give a comprehensive in-class final in the time slot allotted for this class during finals week.

Formal writing assignments that comprise 60% of your grade will include at least: news releases, brochure copy, broadcast PSAs, and web copy. Other possibilities include ad copy, social media copy and/or a speech. You will write your copy of behalf of an enterprise, commercial or nonprofit, of your own choosing. You may use the same one for every assignment, or different ones.

Writing assignments must be submitted both on paper and on Moodle via Turnitin. Be forewarned: The purpose of Turnitin is twofold: 1) it enables me to type my sometimes lengthy feedback on your writing, thus students are expected to review the grademarked version of their work, and 2) it checks for plagiarism and shares an "originality score" with both you and me.

Course Topics/Schedule:

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the schedule as needed.

- Week 1: Overview; textbooks + jump drive; Moodle + Warhawk acct; PDAs/cell phones
In-Class: Diagnostic Writing Exercise
Basics: Getting Organized
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 1
- Week 2: Persuasion and PR & News
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 2 & 3
- Week 3: PR & News
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 4
- Week 4: News Releases & Supplementary Materials
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 5 & 6
Due: Print News Release
- Week 5: Features & Op-eds; Visuals
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 7 & 8
- Week 6: R,TV&OL
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 9
Due: Broadcast PSAs
- Week 7: Distribution
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 10
- Week 8: Web & Digital Media
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 12
Due: Web News Release
- Week 9: Newsletters, Brochures, Intranets
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 13
- Week 10: Email, Memos, Proposals
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 14
Due: Web Copy
- Week 11: Speeches & Presentations
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 15
- Week 12: Direct Mail & Advtg
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 16
Due: Brochure Copy
- Week 13: Mtgs & Events
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 17
- Week 14: Evaluation
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 19
- Week 15: Legal Issues
Reading: Wilcox, Ch. 11
Due: Revisions of no more than 2 of your writing assignments.