

Writing for Public Relations - PUR 4100

Class Number 19556
Class Times Tuesday and Thursday, periods 10 and 11 (5:10 – 7:05 p.m.)
Location Weimer 3028
Instructor Amelia Bell, APR, CPRC
Email amelia.s.bell@gmail.com
Phone 352-246-3082 - This is my cell number. Please use this number to reach me with questions or to schedule appointments. Texts are preferred.
Office Hours By appointment

Course Overview

In this course, you will master the core qualities of excellent writing for public relations. As a public relations professional, it is imperative that you learn to write well across a variety of forms and mediums, and you learn to write quickly. Reading assignments will be posted online or distributed in class, and will come from real life examples. By the end of the course, you will have a portfolio of writing samples that demonstrate your ability to not only write well, but to think strategically on behalf of a client.

Each week, we will combine lecture and discussion with class labs that will give you an opportunity to apply what you've learned from the discussion with hands-on experience. Ultimately, you will generate components of a strategic communications plan.

At the beginning of the course you will identify a client. The client may be an organization you have worked or volunteered with in the past, or an organization whose values or mission with which you identify. The client must be an existing organization. Most of your writing assignments will be completed on behalf of this client. You do not have to obtain permission from the client, or notify them, but you may find it helpful to do so to gain necessary information to complete assignments for this course. You will identify the core messages and audiences for that organization and translate those messages across a variety of forms of strategic communication.

In this course, we will adhere to AP style. All work is expected to be your own original work. Factual and grammatical errors will not be tolerated.

College of Journalism and Mass Communications Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;

- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Required Course Materials

Wilcox, D.L., & Reber, B.H. (2013). *Public relations writing and media techniques* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson (ISBN: 0-205-56263-9)

The Associated Press Stylebook and briefing on Media Law (recent edition)

Please bring a reliable flash drive to save your work on during the semester.

Course Objectives

- Develop key messages and tailor them to specific audiences to achieve strategic public relations objectives.
- Quickly produce clear, concise, well-organized and accurate content, building upon strong key message development.
- Effectively tailor content for multi-media platforms and communication methods.

Prerequisites

To enroll in this course, you must have completed and received a grade of C or better in PUR 3000 (Principles of Public Relations) and JOU 3101 (Reporting).

Appointments

I am available to meet with students by appointment. Please email or text me to schedule an appointment.

Course Professionalism

This College is a professional school, and professional decorum is expected at all times. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means that you will arrive on time, not speak when another student or the instructor are speaking, or use cell phones, laptops or other electronic devices during class.

Class Attendance Policy

Class attendance is not required, but missing class will affect your participation grade. Please do not ask me to review material that I covered when you missed class, unless you missed class due to a serious illness. Requirements for class attendance and make-up assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Academic Honesty

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original work for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including websites, without citing the source. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the UF policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense. Anytime you complete an assignment for this course you will clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from websites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source, without putting quotes around it and attributing the source.

For this class, we will use the MLA in-text citation method. Provide attribution within the text for any ideas, insights, or facts that are not your own. You must also list your sources in a bibliography.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Email

I am happy to answer questions via email. Please do not email me with a question about your assignment within 24 hours of the due date.

Format

Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable. Use page numbers in every assignment.

Grading Policy

- Client Proposal – 5 percent
- Class Participation – 15 percent
- Writing Assignments – 40 percent
- Strategic Communications Plan – 30 percent
- Presentation – 10 percent

No late assignments will be accepted. Assignments may not be made up.

Grades will be based on the following scale:

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| A | 90 – 100 percent – professional and could be published as-is. |
| B | 80 – 89 percent – strong but needs minor revisions |
| C | 70 – 79 percent – errors needs major revisions. |
| D | 60 – 69 percent – needs to be re-written. |
| E | 0 – 59 percent – unacceptable/missed deadline |

You will graduate and become a professional soon. Therefore, the course expectations are that you act professionally which means if you don't understand something – ask! **Late assignments will not be accepted.** I cannot go to my boss and ask for a deadline to be changed because I'm going to a social/ will be on vacation/got sick/ etc. **YOU MUST WRITE YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF YOUR PAPER. PAPERS WITHOUT A NAME WILL NOT BE GRADED. YOU MUST ALSO STAPLE YOUR WORK IF IT IS MORE THAN ONE PAGE.**

Additionally, all assignments will be submitted with a mock email (including subject line) seeking approval from your client for the piece of work.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Class Discussion and Assignment Schedule

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1		August 23 Course Overview and Client Selection On Writing Well, Audience Analysis and Personal Profile Reading: pages 16 - 31
Week 2	August 28 <i>Audience analysis and organizational profile due</i> Strategic Communications Plans – Research/Planning/Implementation and Evaluation Reading: Chapter 18 – 19 Begin SWOT analysis	August 30 <i>SWOT Analysis due</i> Strategic Communications Plans – Message Strategy and Persuasion Reading: Chapter 2 Develop Audience Messages (due end of class)
Week 3	September 4 Begin Client Proposals	September 6 What is News? “Brand Journalism” <i>In class assignment: Identify organizational stories</i>
Week 4	September 11 <i>Client proposal due</i> What is News? News Media Readings: Chapter 3 - 5 In class assignment - Identify and get approval for topics for press releases (two different topics)	September 13 <i>Press releases due with media list</i> News Media In class assignment - Pitches and interview Q/A Readings: Chapter 3 – 5

Week 5	September 18 News Media: Media advisories In class assignment - Media advisory with pitch Reading: Chapter 6	September 20 Advertising and Marketing Communications Reading: Chapter 16
Week 6	September 25 Fundraising In class assignment – start fundraising letter	September 27 <i>Fundraising letters due</i> Presentations and Speechwriting Reading: Chapter 15
Week 7	October 2 Work Day – speech, speech memo and Q/A	October 4 <i>Speech due</i> Speech Presentations
Week 8	October 9 <i>Speech due</i> Speech Presentations	October 11 Fact Sheets and Backgrounders Reading: Chapter 6 In Class Assignment – Fact Sheets – Corporate Overview Focus
Week 9	October 16 PSAs Reading: Chapter 6 In Class Assignment - Begin PSAs	October 18 <i>PSAs due – print, radio and TV with pitch</i> Multimedia: Videos and Photographs In class assignment: Video Script and Storyboard with Log Lines Reading: Chapter 8
Week 10	October 23 Newsletters and brochures/project timelines In class assignment: Employee Newsletter Article (issue raised in SWOT analysis) with Headline and Photo Captions Reading: Chapter 13	October 25 Editorial Pages (op-ed and letters to the editor) Reading: Chapter 7 In class assignment: Start op-ed (issue raised in SWOT analysis – same as employee newsletter topic)
Week 11	October 30 Annual Reports <i>Op-eds due</i> In class assignment: Start annual report stories	November 1 <i>Annual Report Story Due with Headline and Photo Captions</i> Event timelines and budget Reading: Chapter 17 In class assignment: Plan for organizational special event
Week 12	November 6 Feature Writing Reading: Chapter 7 In class assignment: start feature story (launch new product or service for trade publication)	November 8 <i>Feature story due with Headline and Photo Captions</i> Crisis communications In class assignment - Crisis response Reading: page 112 – 114
		November 15

Week 13	November 13 Digital media Blogs, social media, e-releases Reading: Chapter 12 In class assignment – social media strategy	<i>Digital media report due with log lines, Headline and Photo Captions</i> Legal issues and Ethics
Week 14	Happy Thanksgiving – No Class!	
Week 15	November 27 In Class Work Day	November 29 In Class Work Day
Week 16	December 4 <i>Presentations and Final Communications Plan Due</i> Presentations on your final communications plan	