

MCOM 3395 – Writing for PR and Advertising
MWF 12:20 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
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Course Description: Writing for Public Relations and Advertising examines and applies the writing skills required in public relations and advertising. Competency is developed in writing news releases, feature articles, newsletters, advertising copy, magazine articles, brochure copy, and other written tools.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Write correctly and clearly using the formats and compelling storytelling styles appropriate for the audiences and purposes for public relations/integrated communication.
2. Understand and practice the First Amendment and other legal principles.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication.
4. Demonstrate an ability to incorporate elements of visual design and composition into project design.
5. Understand and apply concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication.
6. Conduct research and evaluate information using methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication.
7. Construct a persuasive message, adapted to the audience, purpose, and context of the situation.
8. Strengthen critical and creative thinking abilities.
9. Begin building a portfolio by completing assignments for real clients.

Course Requirements

1. **Books/Readings**
 - a. *On Writing Well* – William Zinsser
 - b. **Handouts** – Found under “Modules – Handouts and Cheat Sheets”
 - c. **(Recommended) AP Stylebook, 55th edition**; ISBN-13: 978-1541647572: Certain assignments must be written in AP style (i.e., news releases) so it is recommended that you have a copy of this text available.

Evaluation and Grade Calculation

Group	Percentage of Final Grade
Writing assignments	60%
Projects	40%

Percent	Letter Grade
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% and below	F

1. **Writing Assignments** (60%) **SLOs – 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8**
 - a. Throughout the semester students will complete a variety of writing practices and writing assignments (press releases, audio and video announcements, etc.) that allow them to practice the material that they are learning from the readings and lectures, and to expand their creativity and writing skills.
2. **Projects** (40%) **SLOs – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9**
 - a. Throughout the semester students will complete three projects (brochure, advertisement, and mini campaign) that incorporate research, planning, writing, and design to allow them to practice the material that they are learning from the readings and lectures, expand their creativity and writing skills, and provide them with an opportunity to produce materials for a personal portfolio.

Spring 2022 Covid-19 Information

Students are expected to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, digestive issues (e.g. nausea, diarrhea), or a higher than normal temperature should stay at home and are encouraged to use the [UT Tyler COVID-19 Information and Procedures \(Links to an external site.\)](#) website to review protocols, check symptoms, and report possible exposure. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

Class Policies and Expectations

1. Classroom Policies and Expectations

- A. Work hard - learning requires constant reading, researching, thinking, discussing, and working with your classmates and me. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to present new information and prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
- B. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
- C. Treat each other with respect and display common classroom courtesies.
 - 1. You are responsible for your attitude and how you treat others. I will not tolerate name calling, fighting, students belittling each other for differing opinions, etc. I expect you to act like adults, show each other respect, and to challenge yourself and each other to learn/understand opinions you may not agree with. If you are not treating individuals with respect or are causing a distraction, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- D. Grading – The grading process begins with the assumption that the work is good, which earns a grade within the range of a “B.” To earn an A, you must show exceptional understanding of the material, utilizing additional sources, examples, and original thought. This means going beyond stating the obvious, the simple answer, or what Google says. Additionally, poor organization, not following assignment instructions, grammar/spelling, lack of depth and thought, failing to illustrate an understanding of the material, etc. will result in your grade being lowered.
- E. The use of cellphones, tablets, or other device use during class times is not allowed unless the need is specified by me (i.e. during an activity). You are not permitted to use cellphones for note taking, check social media, view/work on material for another course, or simply browse the internet during class times.
 - 1. I understand emergencies and the need to take a call or text. If this must happen, be discreet, do not disturb others, do not let it get in the way of your learning, and DO NOT abuse this.
 - 2. If the only device you have to take notes on is your phone, I will provide you with a notebook to take notes during class.
- F. I use Canvas and email to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I expect you to check both daily and stay aware of what is coming up.
 - 1. It is highly recommended that you download the Canvas application and adjust your settings to allow for notifications.
- G. Communicate - If you have a problem with anything throughout the semester... getting an assignment in on time, needing to be absent from a class, getting your book, checking out equipment, or anything I'm doing as a professor... talk to me about it. I cannot help you or fix the problem if I am unaware of it.

H. Hold me to the same standards and expectations that I hold you to.

2. Attendance Policy

- A. Attendance will be taken for each meeting. Students are expected to attend class during each scheduled meeting. If you miss a meeting, it is your responsibility to make up anything you may have missed outside of meeting times, such as completing in-class activities at home, getting any material that may have been handed out during class, and ensuring you are aware of anything that may have been assigned or discussed. Additionally, if you miss a class and want lecture notes, you are responsible for getting these from a classmate (with the exception of special accommodations set up through the university). I will not be recording lectures this semester.
- B. If you must miss an exam period, it is your responsibility to inform me that a make-up exam will be needed. No make-up exams will be allowed if the reason for missing does not fall within the exceptions below.
 - i. Exceptions to this include illness supported by a doctor's note, a school sponsored event that the student has given prior notice for, religious observances that the student has given prior notice for, a death in your family, or an emergency that can be documented. Additional exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with me.
- C. See the current UT Tyler catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second course meeting.

3. Assignment Policies

- A. Assignments do have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. It is your responsibility to utilize time outside of class in an effective manner so you can ensure that you submit each assignment before the due date and time.
 - a. For many assignments, not all, the submission folder will stay open for one week after the due date. Any assignments turned in after the due date will receive a point per day deduction. Specific point values that will be deducted each day can be found on the assignment overviews on Canvas. It is your responsibility to know when the assignment is due for full credit, when the assignment closes, and the number of points that will be deducted each day for late submissions. Assignments will not be accepted after this final date.
- B. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
- C. I will not accept assignments via email unless there are issues with Canvas and the email includes your assignment and a screenshot of the Canvas malfunction.
- D. Merely completing all assignments does not guarantee that you will pass the course. You must put forth effort and show an understanding of the material to earn a satisfactory grade.
- E. Spelling, grammar, and neatness count and you will lose points on assignments if your submissions are not edited.

- F. You are required to utilize APA format for any assignment that requires the utilization of outside sources.
- G. I will not accept screenshots of assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed, formatted to be a .DOC or .DOCX (Pages, Google Drive, and other online word processors must be exported to this specific format), and submitted via Canvas.
- H. Assignments will be discussed in class, students will be given a course schedule, Canvas includes a syllabus function that outlines upcoming due dates, due dates can be seen listed on each assignment under the assignment tab in Canvas, assignment due dates can be added to your Canvas calendar, and each due date will be listed in the course modules. There are SEVERAL ways to determine what is coming up due in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of what is coming up due and to stay on top of your assignments.
- I. Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. A student who is caught doing either will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. If a student is caught a second time, they will automatically fail the course.
 - a. In addition to UT Tyler’s Student Conduct and Discipline policy, plagiarism/cheating includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted in my classes or other professor’s classes, as well as video and audio recordings. I expect you to submit work created specifically for this class during this semester.

Course Schedule

Date	Daily Agenda	Assign in Class	Due
Week 1			
M 1/10	Course introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Overview • Schedule Overview 		
W 1/12	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Organized for Writing 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Introduction and Ch. 1, 2, and 3 • Grammar and Technical Writing handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) 	
F 1/13	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Organized for Writing 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your story (due 1/21) 	
Week 2			
M 1/17	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No class meetings		
W 1/19	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a Persuasive Writer 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 4 & 5 	
F 1/21	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a Persuasive Writer 		Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your story
Week 3			
M 1/24	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Programs and Campaigns 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 6 & 7 • Objectives and Campaign Planning handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) 	
W 1/26	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Programs and Campaigns 		

F 1/28	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini campaign – brainstorming 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming (due 2/4) Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming for mini campaign (due 2/4) Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini campaign (due 4/18) 	
Week 4			
M 1/31	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini campaign – situation analysis 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 8 & 9 • AP Style and News Release handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation analysis for mini campaign (due 2/18) 	
W 2/2	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing News Releases 		
F 2/4	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing News Releases 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP format (due 2/11) 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming for mini campaign
Week 5			
M 2/7	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News Release 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 10 • Fact sheets and Media Kits handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release (due 2/14) 	
W 2/9	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing Fact Sheets, Advisories, and Media Kits 		

F 2/11	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing Fact Sheets, Advisories, and Media Kits 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing clearly and correctly (due 2/18) 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP format
Week 6			
M 2/14	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Feature Content and Op-Eds 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 11 & 12 • Feature Content and Backgrounds handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) 	Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release
W 2/16	Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Feature Content and Op-Eds 		
F 2/18	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backgrounder or Feature Story 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing concisely (due 2/25) Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backgrounder or feature story (due 2/25) 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing clearly and correctly Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation analysis for mini campaign
Week 7			
M 2/21	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini campaign – goals, focus publics, objectives 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 13 & 14 • Advertising handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals, focus publics, and objectives for mini campaign (due 3/4) 	
W 2/23	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Direct Mail and Advertising 		

F 2/25	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Direct Mail and Advertising 	Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic message planner for advertisement project (due 3/18) Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed advertisement (due 3/18) 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing concisely Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backgrounder or feature story
Week 8			
M 2/28	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertisement 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 15 & 16 	
W 3/2	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertisement 		
F 3/4	Workday - Out-of-class/No meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments and projects 	Writing Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-word stories (due 3/18) 	Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals, focus publics, and objectives for mini campaign
Week 9			
M 3/7 – F 3/11 Spring Break – no class meeting			
Week 10			
M 3/14	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini campaign - tools 	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 17 & 18 	
W 3/16	Writing Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini campaign - tools 		

F 3/18	Lecture • Radio, Television, and Online media	Writing Practice • Story summaries (due 3/25)	Writing Practice • 6-word stories Writing Assignment • Strategic message planner for advertisement project Project • Completed advertisement
Week 11			
M 3/21	Lecture • Radio, Television, and online media	Read • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 19 • Audio and Video News Releases handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts)	
W 3/23	Writing Lab • Audio and Video News Release Scripts	Writing Assignment • Audio and video news release scripts (due 4/1)	
F 3/25	Lecture • Newsletters and Brochures	Writing Practice • Advertising slogans (due 4/1)	Writing Practice • Story summaries
Week 12			
M 3/28	Lecture • Newsletters and Brochures	Read • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 20 & 21 • Newsletters and Brochures handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts)	
W 3/30	Writing Lab • Mini campaign		
F 4/1	Writing Lab • Brochure	Writing Assignment • Brochure planning worksheet (due 4/15) Project • Brochure (due 4/15)	Writing Practice • Advertising slogans Assignment • Audio and video news release scripts
Week 13			

M 4/4	Writing Lab • Brochure	Read • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 22 & 23	
W 4/6	Writing Lab • Brochure		
F 4/8	Lecture • Speeches and Presentations		
Week 14			
M 4/11	Lecture • Speeches and Presentations	Read • <i>On Writing Well</i> Ch. 24 & 25 • Speeches and Presentations handouts (Modules – Cheat Sheets and Handouts) Writing Assignment • Presentation material for mini campaign (due 4/18 at the start of class) Project • Presentation for mini campaign (4/18 – 4/22)	
W 4/13	Writing Lab • Mini campaign presentation		
F 4/15	Writing Lab • Mini campaign presentation		Writing Assignment • Brochure planning worksheet Project • Brochure
Week 15			

M 4/18	Mini Campaign Presentations		Writing Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation material for mini campaign (due 4/18 at the start of class) Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation for mini campaign (4/18 – 4/22) • Completed mini campaign project
W 4/20	Mini Campaign Presentations		
F 4/22	Mini Campaign Presentations		
Week 16			
M 4/25 – F 4/29 Finals Week – No Class Meetings			