

Fall 2008

COURSE: Advanced Public Relations Writing

INSTRUCTOR: M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA
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OFFICE: Room 34 – Bozorth [856-256-4224]

BOOKS NEEDED FOR *THIS* COURSE:

The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook
(Second Edition [Blue Cover], Kendall/Hunt, 2008)
Author – M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA

The ABCs of Strategic Communication
(Second Edition [Green Cover], AuthorHouse, 2008)
Author – M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA

Write Right
(First Edition, authorhouse, 2005)
Author – Roger A. Shapiro

The Associated Press Stylebook
(39th Edition or later, 2004)

OBJECTIVE: To continue beyond Basic Public Relations Writing which includes writing effectively for mass media audiences and to refine both oral and written communication skills? This course, as you will read below, is intended to help students master the advanced persuasive strategic writing needed by public relations counselors. Your professor's personal objective is to prepare students for *their* future rather than *his* past. He is here to **HELP**.

Advanced Public Relations Writing includes as many of the following as time allows: Elements of an effective public relations plan (goal, objectives, strategies and tactics); condensing lengthy reports to one page (better writing through self-editing); persuasive writing; writing for newsletters, brochures, magazines, annual reports; preparing position papers; speech writing; preparing (print, audio and video) news releases; preparing direct marketing copy; writing obituaries, an op-ed piece and a counseling paper. You will also be crafting your resume' and cover letter. We'll begin by reviewing English grammar questions raised following Basic Public Relations Writing final exam.

We'll look at backgrounders and pitch letters; review the "Fog Index";

review caption writing (cut lines); and review PSAs for radio and TV.

Each student must complete all assignments. Class participation is also considered for semester grade. Therefore, it is important that students attend all classes, interact and ask questions. Anyone who arrives late should inform Prof. Litwin. Deadlines and accuracy are vital in the communication profession and are factored into final grades. **Missed tests may not be made up. Late assignments will be downgraded 10 points. Cell phones are off limits during class: No calls – no text messaging – no IMing. An occasional glance to check the time is acceptable. But don't "push it." More than three absences will affect a student's grade.**

Students are responsible for reading assigned chapters in *The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook* and PR terms used in class, which are in *The ABCs of Strategic Communication*.

Students should carry with them, at all times, a dictionary and/or 40,000 words book, the *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*, *Grammar Gremlins* by Don K. Ferguson and *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White.

It is imperative that papers be written (typed) in clear, concise English. Points will be deducted for improper grammar and poor sentence structure, and for spelling errors. Just to make it clear, **FIVE** points will be deducted for every spelling, grammatical, typographical and A-P style error. There is no extra credit for rewrites in "advanced." However, rewrites are encouraged.

If you have a question about a class being held, call me at 856-767-7730. Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful semester!

Probable Assignments (Subject to change)

- Spelling Tests
- Op-ed Piece
- Position Paper
- Speech written for another
- Newsletter copy – Internal/external
- Obituary
- Counseling Paper
- Copy for Issue Ad
- Visual aid for presentation
- Magazine Article
- Management Memo (Query)
- Proposal
- Pitch Letter/Business Letter
- Mission Statement
- Captions/Cutlines
- Persuasive Writing (Proposal)
- Social Media Release Template
- Video News Release (Including Storyboards)
- Editing copy
- Handling complaint Letter
- Briefing Book
- Editing handouts
- Style Tests
- Fog Index
- Cover Letter/Resume'
- Goal copy
- Objective Copy
- Strategy Copy
- Tactic Copy
- Final Exam
- Annual Report

ASSIGNMENT DUE NEXT CLASS (Sept. 8): Write a 250-400 word feature about *The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook* dropping in persuasive

quotes. Consider yourself a publicist who has reviewed the book for a feature news release. For Monday, Sept. 15, you will be writing a 250-400 word obit (feature). Select a living celebrity or fabricate this piece. The obit contents are most important, and it should be set up using your release template with a contact person (see pages 93-99 and 195-201 in *The PR Playbook*). It must take on a human interest, feature approach using quotes.

Students will be graded on **Associated Press style, grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence construction**. You may use *hyphens* and em dashes.

Overall Grading		Assignment Breakdown
A = 95-100	C = 77-74	Writing Assignments = 50%
A- = 94-92	C- = 73-72	Tests, Quizzes and Class Participation = 5%
B+ = 91-88	D+ = 71-67	Annual Report = 20%
B = 87-84	D = 66-64	Final Exam = 25%
B- = 83-82	D- = 63-60	
C+ = 81-78	F = 59 and below	

The following is university policy: Once drop-add ends, students are permitted to add a course only in cases of documented emergency. The special form (hardship form) for late schedule adjustment specifically calls for a description and attached documentation of the particular emergency in that student’s case.

**STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
 PASSED BY UNIVERSITY SENATE: 5/10/05
 APPROVED BY INTERIM PROVOST: 8/25/05**

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations. We look forward to working with you to meet your learning goals.

If you have a question about a class being held, call me at 856-767-7730. Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful semester!

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION

Student Information

Your Name _____

College Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary (Home/Cell) Phone _____

Secondary (Work) Phone _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

High School _____ Town _____

Declared Major _____ Year _____

Other Colleges Attended _____

Profession/Employer _____

Professional Goal _____