The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Communication
COMM3320: Writing for Public Relations
Fall 2018
CRN: 16332

Instructor: MBA/MA Eli Garcia
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Phone: (915) 747-5310
Office: Cotton 204
Office hours: MW 12:00-1:20 PM
TR 3:30-4:30 PM

Class meeting times:
Tuesdays 6:00 - 8:50 PM
Location: Cotton 104

Course Description:
This course focuses on understanding and practicing the writing techniques utilized in diverse public relations media. Emphasis will be given to audience analysis, news releases, media kits, as well as other relevant written promotional materials/formats.

Course Learning Objectives:
- Learn the diverse writing techniques used in a variety of public relations media
- Understand the diverse steps involved in the public relations writing process
- Write in a concise, factual, organized and persuasive manner
- Understand the strategic role public relations writing practices represent for all type of organizations
- Develop critical thinking, teamwork and strategic planning skills, as these are an integral part of the corporate communication/public relations field

Course Methodology:
- The course consists of a combination of lectures, discussions, individual/group projects and presentations
- Students will participate in diverse class projects that will demand the practical application of the theoretical concepts discussed in class
- Throughout the semester students will be required to demonstrate the skills and knowledge learned through the entire course by developing and presenting diverse public relations writing samples (news releases, media kits, etc.)

Learning Outcome:
- Competence in writing for different public relations media

Outcome Assessment/Grading:
- Students will demonstrate their skills and knowledge by successfully fulfilling the assignments required to pass this course.

Materials and bibliography:
Required textbook:
- Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques. 7th edition or later
  Author: Dennis L. Wilcox, Bryan H. Reber
- The Associated Press Stylebook, any edition 2015 or later
Grading:
All turned-in assignments must be hard copy. No e-mails accepted.

- Your final class grade will be the average of your scores in the following six categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation (individual)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test # 1 (individual)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #1 News Release (individual)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2 PR Profession Assignment (individual/group)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #3 Media Kits (team project)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #4 PR Program Outline (team project)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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Final Grade = Sum of scores (points earned for each assignment) divided by 6.

Each writing assignment, including the final, will be graded on a 1-100 scale based on the following criteria:

- Accuracy 20
- Content 20
- Organization 20
- Application of writing style and concepts, AP Style 20
- Grammar, spelling 20

Total possible points p/assignment 100

Grading Scale
90 - 100 points = A
80 - 89 points = B
70 - 79 points = C
60 - 69 points = D
59 or below = F

Class participation
Participation will also be scored from 1 to 100.
At beginning of the semester all students have the total maximum points for this section (100 points).
However, I will deduct ten points from your class participation score for each unjustified absence.

Your responsibilities for the course:
- All written assignments must be hard copy (no e-mails accepted) and handed in on time double-spaced and have adequate margins for reviewer comments (about an inch). Use 12-point type, Times New Roman or Courier font.
- Deadlines for all assignments will be strictly enforced. I won’t accept assignments after deadline. Missing a deadline is equivalent of not doing the assignment.
- Students are expected to attend each and every class and to be punctual.
- Show respect. The use of cell phones and text messages won’t be allowed during class time. Please turn cell phones to silent mode before entering the classroom. Be courteous to classmates by paying attention to presentations and by being open-minded in regard to the opinions and ideas of others.
**Academic Misconduct**
The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

**Cass Policy**
If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu. Or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS’ Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

**Calendar**
The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes in the schedule/calendar/assignments depending on the needs of the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Meeting</th>
<th>Topic-Activity</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 8/28          | • Introduction to the Course  
• Student presentations  
• Introduction to PR |                  |
| 9/4           | • Introduction to PR continuation  
• Getting Organized for Writing  
• Becoming a persuasive writer | Ch.1  
Ch.2 |
| 9/11          | • Finding and Making News  
• Working with Journalists and bloggers | Ch.3  
Ch.4 |
| 9/18          | • Exam 1 (Chapters 1-4)  
• Writing the News release | Ch.5 |
| 9/25          | • Headlines, leads, inverted Pyramid)  
• Workshop: Writing the news release  
• News Release Proposal due  
• News Release Proposal due | In class notes and lecture |
| 10/2          | • Writing the news release workshop  
• PR profession assignment proposal due |                  |
| 10/9          | • Assignment1 News Release Due | Ch.6  
In class notes and lecture |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Page Reference</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Media Kits continuation</td>
<td>Ch.8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Media Kits Proposal Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Workshop: Media Kits/ The PR profession</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>Assignment #2 due: The PR profession</td>
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<td>Presentations: The PR profession</td>
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<td>11/6</td>
<td>Workshop: Media Kits</td>
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<td>11/13</td>
<td>Media Kits due</td>
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<td><strong>Media Kits Presentations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>PR Campaign Outline Explanation</td>
<td>Ch. 18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In class notes and lecture</td>
<td>Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Workshop: PR campaign Outline Practice</td>
<td>Ch.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>Assignment #4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Campaign Outline and Presentations</strong></td>
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