PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING—COMM 335
SPRING 2010 (Term 101) MWF 11 A.M. AND 1 P.M. ECTR 120

INSTRUCTOR: Patrick Harwood, Department of Communication
OFFICE: Downtown: R.S. Small Building, Room 126.
For dropping off work, I have a box at the main Communication Department office. You can also slide work under my office door. Please note: Homework is never accepted by email.
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COURSE WEBSITE: www.harwoodp.people.cofc.edu
OFFICE HOURS: MWF 10-10:50 a.m. and 12-12:50 p.m./TR 12:30-1:30 p.m.


Course Objectives
The primary goal of this course is for students to develop practical PR writing skills while generating a broad awareness and knowledge of how PR is integrated into marketing and communications programs. More specifically, you will:

- Build on the concepts learned in Public Relations Concepts (Comm. 235). Translate concepts into concrete, written works.
- Develop writing skills tailored specifically for the public relations profession.
- Evaluate various channels for effective public relations opportunities and develop writing skills for various outlets.
- Gain a broader understanding of the profession with an emphasis on how and why public relations are integrated into an organization’s marketing and communications strategy.
- Apply the textbook and classroom discussion to “real world” public relations situations by discussing headlines and issues of the day.
- Develop a professional portfolio of writing samples to show prospective employers (save all the news releases and other work for this).

Attendance Policy
Please be in class on time! Coming in late is very distracting and doing it repeatedly will demonstrate poor planning and inconsideration on your part. Roll will be taken each day. Five unexcused absences will result in an automatic final grade deduction of half a letter grade. Repeated tardiness will also be noted and could affect your final grade. Again, as a policy I do not accept work via email.
Exams
There are two exams - a midterm and a final. Each exam covers content covered in the textbook. The exams may also test your knowledge of key concepts of writing, including AP Style. A study guide will be posted on our class website one week before each exam. The exams will be a combination of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, Associated Press writing style, and PR-type writing, such as news releases.

Exam grading scale:  A  94-100;  A-  90-93;  B+-- 87-89; B  84-86; B-  80-83;  C+  77-79;  C  74-77; C-  70-73; D+  67-69; D  64-66; D-  60-63; F—59 and below

Homework and Quizzes
Homework will be assigned with the book chapters, specifically the Skill Building Activities at the end of each chapter. These papers must be typed and double-spaced and should show comprehension of material, accuracy and creativity. There may be unannounced quizzes related to chapters in the book after they are assigned for you to read.

Focus on the Faculty Website Project
For several years my PR students and I have produced and maintained a website that features C of C faculty research and expertise. We will be adding new feature articles to this Focus on the Faculty website which can be viewed at: http://cofc.edu/~facfocus/. This semester instead of adding new faculty (which we just did last semester) we will update the articles from previous years.

Final Grade Determination
Midterm and Final Exams 40 percent
Book homework, quizzes and other assignments 25 percent
(use check plus, check, check minus grading system for these)
“Focus on the Faculty” Article 10 percent
End-of-semester portfolio (to be detailed) 10 percent
Newsletter Project 10 percent
Participation and attendance 5 percent

Final Grades:  A (Superior)=4.0; A-=3.7; B+ (Very Good)=3.3; B (Good)=3.0;
B-=2.7; C+ (Fair)=2.3; C=2.0; C-=1.7; D+=1.3; D ( Barely Acceptable/Passing)=1.0;
D-=.70; F (Failure)=0.0

Extra Credit Opportunities
You can have points added to your test scores by writing news releases on communication and media-related speakers and events at the College of Charleston and around Charleston this semester. You can also do an extra FOF article or two. Up to three points can be added to your lowest test score per extra credit. Maximum three such pieces per student (meaning you can earn up to nine extra credit points). These can be turned in up to the final class in December.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Please note about this schedule: This is often updated before each class so be aware that this schedule changes from the one you may print early in the term. Specific homework for each chapter is listed but is subject to change. Assignments will be posted a day or two before each class. I will go through this schedule each class so you are clear what is due and when. If you are absent be sure to check this online schedule to see what is coming up, what the homework is, etc.

Note: Friday, Jan. 15 is the drop/add deadline date. Monday, Feb. 22 is last day to withdraw with a “W” mark.

Week 1—January 11
- Course introduction; syllabus; student info sheets; Focus on the Faculty website project
- Wednesday—Preview Chapter 1, “Getting Organized for Writing”
- **Homework for Friday, Jan. 15:**
  - Read Chapter 1, “Getting Organized for Writing”
  - Complete either Skill Building Activity Nos. 4 AND 5 on p. 32 (all such papers should be typed and double-spaced)
- Friday—discuss Student Profile article/release (pattern after Student Profiles on the C of C homepage. You will be matched with a student during class and given time to talk to each other and to exchange phone/email.
- **Homework for Wednesday, Jan. 20:** Each student writes a 250-plus word article with quotes about another student in this class.
  - Scenario is that this is running as part of CofC printed and online material for prospective students and their parents
  - Use Cougar Close-Up template or something similar to give article a professional “camera ready” look
  - Article should have at least three direct quotes from your student
  - Include a photograph of your student also in your layout
  - Keep tone of story positive and upbeat
  - Keep paragraphs short
  - It’s OK to have your student review piece before it’s “published”

Week 2—January 18 (no class Monday, MLK holiday)
- **Wednesday—Student Profile releases due—discuss, review, collect**
- Review News Release formatting
- Preview and outline the SGA Adopt-A-Street news release
- **Homework for Friday, Jan. 22:** Type/write/format SGA Adopt-A-Street news release (follow proper News Release format; see writing tips, p. 135)
- Friday—Peer review Adopt-A-Street release and preview Chapter 2, “Becoming a Persuasive Writer”
- **Homework for Monday, Jan. 25:**
  - Read Chapter 2, “Becoming a Persuasive Writer”
  - Complete one of the Skill Building Activities: No. 2, 3, 4 or 5 on p. 59
  - Put response(s) in form of a professional memo or proposal with company letterhead (can be from your own PR firm)
Week 3—January 25

- Continue Chapter 2, “Becoming a Persuasive Writer” and preview Chapter 3, “Avoiding Legal Hassles”
- Monday: Go over Chapter 2 homework (groups maybe); Review College’s Brand Manual, especially wordmark and visual identity parts
- Wednesday: Chapter 3 Powerpoint
- Start to discuss Focus on the Faculty website—assign profs to students and discuss setting up standard question form to be sent to all professors
- Homework for Friday, Jan. 29:
  - Read Chapter 3, “Avoiding Legal Hassles”
  - Complete one of the three Skill Building Activities, p. 89-90
  - Put response(s) in form of a professional memo or proposal with company letterhead (can be from your own PR firm)
- Homework for Monday, Feb. 1: Design and write a Focus on the Faculty Pitch Letter using Focus on the Faculty and the current logo as your letterhead. Address your letter to a specific professor from the list. Introduce yourself and write what we are doing this semester as far as updating past articles. List five or more key questions you would ask the professor during an interview. Say you also want to take a new photograph for the website. And say that you will soon be in touch to arrange an interview and photo. At the end write your name, phone number and email address.

Week 4—February 1

- Monday—review and collect FOF Pitch Letters due today
- Revise letters after I go over them so that we can send them to the professors via campus mail and email (once you select your two professors)
- Preview Chapter 4, “Finding and Making News”
- Homework for Wednesday, Feb. 3:
  - Read Chapter 4, “Finding and Making News”
  - From the Skill Building Activities on p. 117, do one of the first five. We’ll do No. 6 in class Wednesday
  - Put response(s) in form of a professional memo or proposal with company letterhead (can be from your own PR firm)
- Wednesday’s Class: Finish selections of first FOF faculty members; go over Chapter 4 homework and do No. 6 activity in class; discuss finalizing the FOF letters to professors
- Friday’s Class: We will send letters to professors using campus mail and email
- Go over Feature Writing material

Week 5—February 8

- Chapter 5, “Writing the News Release”
- Chapter 5 mentions the AP Writing Stylebook (go over)
- Homework for Wednesday, Feb. 10:
  - Read Ch. 5, “Writing the News Release”
  - Complete Skill Building Activities 1 and 4 on p. 139-140
- Homework for Friday, Feb. 12:
Email your FOF professor with a note and the letter you mailed (don’t send as an attachment—cut and paste it)—bring a copy of your email to turn in Friday

- Friday in class copy edit for AP Style (handout)
- Friday— Chapter 6, “Preparing Fact Sheets, Advisories, Media Kits and Pitches”
- **Homework for Monday, Feb. 15:**
  - Read Chapter 6, “Preparing Fact Sheets, etc…”
  - Skill Building Activities on p. 161—do Nos. 2 and 3—produce professional looking and sounding/reading Media Alert/Advisories and Pitch Letters

**Week 6—February 15**

- Focus on the Faculty update—first updated articles are due Friday, Feb. 26
- More on Associated Press writing style for news releases
- Writing Feature/Profile Articles—go over web posting
- Review several current FOF articles and similar features currently on the C of C news site
- **Homework for Wednesday, Feb. 17:**
  - Type an update on your FOF professors—what’s the status as far as conducting interviews, getting new photos? Also include this information: Your prof’s office location, phone number and office hours this semester. And his/her class teaching schedule this semester if you can find it
- **Wednesday:**
  - Chapter 7, “Creating News Features and Op-Ed”
  - Discuss Chapter 7 homework (changed from previous syllabus listing)—“Cougar Close-Up”
  - Discuss layout, design, topics
  - Friday we will randomly select partners and you will interview each other during class (like we did before)
  - See Cougar Volunteer Spirit for layout ideas at [www.cofc.edu/~volunteerspirit](http://www.cofc.edu/~volunteerspirit)

- **Homework for Monday, Feb. 22:**
  - Prepare your “Cougar Close-Up” feature on a fellow student in the class. Include a photo of your student. Design piece in a bullet point style or as a Q&A. Have at least 10 questions. Call the piece “10 Questions” if like that title. Or come up with your own title. Topics should include basic background such as hometown, major, year, post-graduation aspirations (dream job?), plus comments about news of the day
  - NEWS VIEWS—College of Charleston Students Voice Their Opinions (another possible name for this feature)
Week 7—February 22
- “News Views”/“Cougar Close-Ups” due Monday (Ch. 7 homework)
- Distribute Midterm Exam Writing Portion
- Chapter 8, “Selecting Publicity and Photos and Graphics”
- Homework for Wednesday, Feb. 24:
  - Read Chapter 8, “Selecting Publicity Photos/Graphics”
  - Do Skill Building Activities Nos. 1 AND 2 (p. 206-7)
  - Do this professionally, listing your ideas on your PR agency letterhead. Address it to a prospective new client who is interested in your agency’s photographic expertise
- Start to discuss midterm exam which is on either Friday, March 5 (move up to Wednesday depending on class progress)
- Wednesday—review posted Midterm Exam Study Guide (Ch. 1-8)
- Discuss Copy Edit part of test which will be done during class on Monday. Friday during class will do an in-class exercise involving copy editing and the Associated Press writing style
- Friday, Feb. 26: First FOF article due today
- Friday in class do peer reviews of FOF articles before turning in
- Practice exercise—AP Style and copy editing

Week 8—March 1
- Monday- Midterm Exam Copy Edit/AP Style portion today—in class— you’ll be given half the class period to complete this
- Go over parts of Midterm due at start of test Friday
- Friday- Midterm Exam

Week 9—March 8—Spring Break Week—No Classes

Week 10—March 15
- Return and review Midterm Exams
- Update on FOF articles—revised copy, with professor’s approval, is due next Monday, March 22
  - Next Monday turn in new version (for letter grade)
  - Needs to be approved by your professor first—email from professor or copy of article with his/her notes
  - Turn in proof that professor has OKed new version
  - Turn in first draft with my comments and peer review comments
  - Stable everything together with new version first
  - You will get a second letter grade for this article
  - Grade can be lower than first grade if corrections and requested additions (by me) are not in the new version
  - Second version must be on Focus on the Faculty letterhead
- Homework for Wednesday, March 17:
  - Revise your FOF article and then email it to your professor
You can also drop off a hand copy version to the prof’s office
Stress that it needs to be returned to you by Friday with
approval and/or requested changes

- **Wednesday: Chapter 9, “Writing for Radio and Television”**
- **Homework for Friday, March 19:**
  - Read Chapter 9, “Writing for Radio and Television”
  - Complete Activities 2 and 4 on page 248—make these
    professional looking on appropriate business letterhead
- **Friday: Go over ANRs written for today and how to produce them on
  computers; go over second part of homework: SMT memo
- **Also Friday: Chapter 10, “Distributing News to the Media”**
- **Homework for Monday, March 22:**
  - Prepare new version of FOF articles—turn in hard copy
    Monday along with previous marked version and email or
    other note from your professor that he/she has approved the
    new version
  - Read Chapter 10, “Distributing News to the Media”
  - Complete Skill Building Activity 1 on page 271—list at least 10
    magazines that reach women ages 18-35. Do this in the form of
    a memo to a specific sunscreen company from your PR agency
    or the company itself (this is a portfolio item)
  - Answer Question 2 on page 271-- incorporate this response
    into your memo for Activity 1 (above)
  - Complete Skill Building Activity 4 on page 271 (regular paper
    OK, this one isn’t for the portfolio)

**Week 11—March 22**
- **Monday: Revised FOF articles due today (with prof’s approval)**
  - Remember, you must also include first version with notes
    from me and classmates, plus professor’s approval note—
    staple all together with new version on top
- **Monday: Go over Chapter 10 homework
- Discuss Newsletter Project and go over posted guidelines
- Arrange class visit by the Alicia Lutz, the editor of C of C’s Portico,
  the college’s employee newsletter
- **Chapter 11, “Getting Along with Journalists”**
- **Homework for Wednesday, March 24:**
  - Read Chapter 11, “Getting Along with Journalists”
  - Complete Skill Building Activity 2 on page 303
- **Wednesday: Guest Speaker- Tonya McGue, Communications
  Specialist, Business Affairs Office, College of Charleston
- **Friday: Chapter 12, “Tapping the Web and New Media”**
- **Homework for Monday, March 29:**
  - Read Chapter 12, “Tapping the Web and New Media”
  - Complete one of the four Skill Activities on page 349—this is not
    for your portfolio unless you want to do No. 3
Week 12—March 29

- Chapter 13, “Producing Newsletters and Brochures”
- Wednesday, March 31: Meet in lobby of Robert Scott Small Building. We are meeting with Alicia Lutz, editor C of C Portico newsletter and other C of C publications
- Homework for Friday, April 2:
  - Read Chapter 13, “Producing Newsletters and Brochures”
  - Complete Skill Activity 1 on page 384 using three C of C publications. Can be Portico, the George Street Observer and one other of your choosing
  - Put on your PR agency letterhead as if you are a consultant hired by the college to conduct a communication audit. This is a portfolio item.
- Homework for Monday, April 5: Email to me your final FOF article the photo(s) of your professor. Make sure article is sent as an unzipped Word document and is named with your prof’s name such as HughWilderFOFArticle. Your photo needs to be sent separately as a jpeg and should also be labeled appropriately: HughWilderjpeg.

Week 13—April 5

- Monday: Newsletter guidelines and timeline posted: review
- Newsletter is due Friday, April 23: emailed to the class and others and also turn in a color hard copy
- Gather student email addresses in order to send sample C of C Scene newsletter to everyone in class
- Homework for Wednesday, April 7:
  - Open your own account with Constant Contact (www.constantcontact.com)
  - Also, write a description of what your Newsletter will be about. See posted guidelines for what this paper should entail
- Wednesday: Chapter 14, “Writing E-mail, Memos, and Proposals”
- Homework for Friday, April 9:
  - Read Chapter 14, “Writing E-mail, Memos, etc.”
  - Complete Activity 3 on p. 402. This is a Portfolio item so put on store letterhead. Design a discount coupon to accompany your letter.
  - OR write a letter to the editor of The Post and Courier responding to a letter to the editor (see posting on class website) criticizing the South Carolina Aquarium. The paper published this letter on Feb. 2. You are the community relations director at the aquarium. You are also sending this letter to the man who wrote the letter, so include a discount coupon with this one too.
• Friday: Demonstrate posting FOF articles on the website

Week 14—April 12
• Final Portfolio Guidelines posted and review
• Portfolio is due on our last class: Monday, April 26
• Chapter 18, “Planning Programs and Campaigns”
• Homework for Wednesday, April 14
  • Read Chapter 18, “Planning Programs and Campaigns”
  • Do Skill Building Activity 2 on page 501-2
  • Put your 8-part Program Plan on StarGate social network site letterhead. You are this new start-up company’s V.P. for Corporate Communications
• Wednesday: Behind the scenes look at the Family Circle Cup Tennis Tournament from the communications perspective
• Homework for Friday:
  ▪ Turn in a typed detailed description of your Newsletter. Be specific with what articles and photos will be; what it will be titled; and other required elements (see posted description)
• Friday: Newsletter Project updates

Week 15—April 19 (last full week of classes—all classes end Monday, April 26
• Chapter 19, “Measuring Success”
• Newsletter Project updates
• Wednesday: Take Class FOF Photo—be here or be left out!
• Friday, April 23: Newsletters are due—hard copy and email to class list and others (including me!)
• Final Exam Proposal Writing Part: As part of your final exam you are to do Skill Building Activity 4 on page 402 from Chapter 14, “Writing E-mails, Memos, and Proposals” (worth 10 points on test)
  o The proposal should be written to the executive board of the College of Charleston’s Student Government Association
  o You are the public relations director of a student organization that wants to sponsor a week-long binge drinking awareness program
  o Choose a student organization that would organize such an event and have your proposal on the group’s letterhead
  o The formal proposal should include an opening few sentences or a paragraph introducing yourself, the program and what you want the SGA to do.
  o Then follow with the 10 sections of a program plan listed on page 398
  o Be sure to end the proposal by signing your name
  o It’s OK if this goes more than one page
Week 16—Monday, April 26- Last Class (Exams begin Wednesday, April 28)
  • **Final Portfolios are due today**—turn in in a professional-looking way, have all materials in a binder with a professional cover
  • Final Exam Study Guide review

EXAM DATES:
  • 11 a.m. Class: Friday, April 30, noon
  • 1 p.m. Class: Monday, May 3, noon
  • Final Exam (tentative) covering Chapters 9-14, 18 and 19 (skip 15-17)

** Friday, May 7, Noon-- Final Grades due on Cougar Trail
** Tuesday, May 11, 8 a.m.—Students can view final grades on Cougar Trail
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