

**Michael L. Kent, Ph.D.**

**Communication Studies**

**SPCM 322: Public Relations Writing**

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**Course Description:** Public Relations Writing teaches students the basic principles associated with writing in an assortment of styles. Students learn how to construct specialized written documents such as backgrounders, brochures, business letters, pitch letters, infographics, news releases, stationery, business cards, and logos. Aesthetics are a central focus of the class and students learn the features of effective design and what design options exist. Students are encouraged to begin portfolio building. Associated Press (AP) style is emphasized.

**Objectives**

- To introduce students to advanced writing activities, and build on basic writing skills already learned.
- For students to understand how to create a variety of written documents.
- For students to demonstrate understanding of AP style.
- For students to demonstrate understanding of theories of communication and human motivation used to create persuasive documents.

**Academic Dishonesty:** The University is an academic community of scholars. Academic dishonesty is a very serious offense against the integrity of this community and will not be tolerated. All academic work submitted by you is assumed to be your own original work and to contain your own thought, research, and self-expression. Work that borrows the ideas, organization, or wording, from others must be properly acknowledged. Similarly, work that was conducted for another class should not be passed off as original.

**Plagiarism** is the unauthorized or inappropriate use of the words or ideas of others. Plagiarism occurs when written or spoken material is borrowed (even from oneself), in whole or in part, and passed off as original by a writer or speaker. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, presenting someone else's ideas, speech, presentation, essay, book review, or news release as original. It also includes failing to document or cite the source of word-for-word or paraphrased material in oral presentations or written assignments.

It is my policy to pursue plagiarism vigorously, to fail students who plagiarize for the entire class, and to report cases of plagiarism to the university administration.

- Please submit all work in a professional "final-draft-looking" form.
- NB: "draft," dot matrix, hand-written, or typewriter documents will not be accepted.
- Late assignments will be discounted 10% per calendar day.

**The Department of Communication's attendance policy:** students may miss the equivalent of one week of classes without penalty. If three classes are missed (on a two day a week schedule), your final grade will be reduced by 5%; if four classes are missed, your final grade will be reduced by 10%. Missing more than two weeks worth of classes will result in a failing grade for the course. Illnesses (your own or others) will not affect this policy so do not waste your absences if you are not sick.

**For "perfect" attendance:** (including being on time for each class) you will gain an additional 3% on your final grade. No exceptions to bonus will be made for any reason.

## Required Readings

- Treadwell and Treadwell, (2000) Public Relations Writing: Principles in Practice. ISBN: 0-205-30015-4.
- Goldstein, N. (ed.) (2000). Associated Press Stylebook: And briefing on media law. New York: Associated Press. ISBN: 0-917360-19-2
- International Paper's Pocket Pal [18<sup>th</sup> edition]. No ISBN (must be ordered direct from International Paper).

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<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
Field Trip(s) Printer/Publisher (required P/F 100 each)	
Exams (4@150)	600
Publication Presentation †	400
Resume	150
News Release	150
Business Letter (response to angry customer)	150
Brochure (design/content)	250
Logo/Stationery/Business card	300
Backgrounders (fact Sheet, biographical information on organizational leader, company history)	300
<u>Informational Graphics (3 Infographics)</u>	<u>300</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,700</b>

† Each presentation must include a pre-presentation homework assignment (given by the group), an activity during the presentation, and additional handouts/visual-aides during the presentation.

**Note:** College level writing standards are expected on all work submitted (this includes correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, careful proofreading, etc.). No spelling errors are allowed—having even one spelling error will result in a zero for the assignment in question. All assignments should be double-spaced (with 25–27 lines-per-page), have one-inch margins (1”) all around, and be written in one of the following fonts: Bookman or Bookman Old Style 11pt., New Century Schoolbook 11 pt., Garamond 12 pt., or Bernhard Modern 12 pt.. For headings, use **boldface type, Ariel Black, or Helvetica Black.**

# Get Out of Jail Free

**This card entitles the bearer to one of the following:**

- ❑ Eliminate or reduce a late penalty on one written assignment (depending upon the severity of the infraction).
- ❑ Eliminate or reduce a time penalty on one speech/presentation (depending upon the severity of the infraction).
- ❑ Rewrite one assignment (not already A- or above) within one week of it being returned.
- ❑ **Make one “deal” with the instructor.**



**Request (be Specific)**

**This card may not be used to:**

- Change the date or time of an exam.
- Take a makeup exam.
- Obtain additional absences.
- Eliminate an attendance penalty.
- Eliminate a late-to/early-from class penalty.
- Receive credit for work done in another class.

This offer is subject to change without notice. Coupons must be redeemed at the time of use. This offer is non-transferable and carries no cash value. This offer does not apply to any other class penalties not explained in this document. Void where prohibited by law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date