

Spring 2014 Class: JOUR 3420.002
Public Relations Writing
Tuesday/Thursday from 9:30 a.m. – 10:50a.m.
Location: GAB 111

Description:

This class is designed to develop students' professional Public Relations thinking and writing skills. To become effective Public Relations professionals, students will work and act proactively in response to tight deadlines. Students must complete JOUR 3321 as a prerequisite to this course.

Instructor:

Rebecca Noah Poynter
Adjunct Professor
rebecca.poynter@unt.edu (use Blackboard messages for this class)
Cell: 202-746-3298

Office Hours:

Office hours are after class. Additional office hours can be arranged on Thursdays by appointment. To reach me, email me, and I will respond within 24 hours, except on weekends.

Class Attendance:

Twice weekly class attendance is expected. If you miss more than three times and/or arrive late, this will be considered in your class participation grade.

Class and Blackboard Participation:

Class: Class meetings are treated as a weekly business meeting. Students are learning to be Public Relations professionals. Cell phones are to be turned off, laptops may be used only to take notes and/or conduct approved activities when noted. Assignments are due through Turnitin on Blackboard and in hardcopy to me at the beginning of class. Late assignments automatically lose a letter grade. Reading should be completed before class. There are three tests which will be taken in-class with mobile devices not allowed. There may be additional requirements announced to maintain classroom etiquette. There is no make-up for in-class exercises.

Blackboard: Class information will be communicated using Blackboard, please check regularly. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are to be submitted through Turnitin in Blackboard and are due at the beginning of class. After the deadline Turnitin will lock you out. Blackboard or Turnitin Help Desk is 940-369-7394 or 940-565-2324 after hours.

UNT Email: UNT email is required. As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the my.unt.edu site www.my.unt.edu. If you do not regularly check EagleConnect or link it to your favorite e-mail account, please do. The website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your email: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

Grading:

90 percent or higher of total possible points: A
80 percent - lower than 90 percent: B
70 percent - lower than 80 percent: C
60 percent - lower than 70 percent: D
Lower than 60%: F

Exams- 25 points

Grammar and AP exam-5
Midterm Exam-10
Final Exam-10

Written Assignments-35 points including

Memo -5
Design/Message/Brand -5
Fact Sheet- 5
Feature Story -5
Position Paper - 10
Media Release, Media List, Pitch -5

In-class assignments -25 points including

Crisis Communication Response -5
Media Advisory/PSA -5
Q/A, Backgrounder, Talking Points- 5
Internet Repackage Work Product -5
Essay- 5

Presentation: 20 points

Class Participation-5
Professional Presentation Packet - 10
Intro Assignments including Resume and Self Introduction- 5

Major Projects Requirement:

Approval of a selected nonprofit to conduct assignments is required. This nonprofit selected may not be one you are or have interned for or used for Journalism 34210 or JOUR 4460. Additional qualifications will be reviewed in class.

Textbooks:

The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online. Do not return these textbooks, they will be used again in JOUR 4460.

(Required) Wilcox, Dennis L., and Bryan H. Reber. *Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques*. 7th ed. Boston. Pearson, 2013. (Abbr. WR)

(Required) Kessler, Lauren and Duncan McDonald. *When Words Collide: A Media Writer's Guide to Grammar and Style*. 8th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2012. (Abbr. KM)

(Required) Williams Robin. *The Non-Designers Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice*, 3rd ed. Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press, 2008. (Abbr. RW)

(Required) Christian, Darrell, Sally Jacobsen, and David Minthorn, eds. *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*. 47th ed. New York: Associated Press, 2012

Course Objectives:

1. Ability to create a variety of public relations documents.
2. Conduct research and evaluate information.
3. Understand how to utilize media for Public Relations communications.
4. Recognize legal and ethical challenges and understand crisis communications response.
5. Use AP style in written assignments.
6. Recognize opportunities for collaboration in nonprofit communications.
7. Apply narrative writing principles to classroom assignments to tell the story and inspire.
8. Work proactively to complete assignments under deadline pressure.
9. Write clear and concise copy.

Department of Journalism Objectives:

1. Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
2. Write correctly and clearly in forms and style appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
3. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
4. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Writing Requirements and Citations:

All written submissions, assignments, discussions and emails will be in standard English using your best grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary and in 12-point Times New Roman. The AP Stylebook is the grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage guide for this class. Please refer to the AP Stylebook and "When Words Collide" for every assignment.

All sources must be cited within the text or in footnotes at the end of the assignment. Sources must be cited in their entirety, whether a website, blog, book, magazine or journal article, or any other scholarly source, including

the date of publication. Citation of online sources must follow the format from the Purdue Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/> and must be complete. Raw links will not be accepted as citations or bibliography entries unless otherwise specified.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or exams; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor, the acquisition of tests or other material belonging to a faculty member, dual submission of a paper or project, resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructors, or any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes the paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook.

Academic Integrity Policy:

The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school's policy aligns with UNT Policy 18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

Grading Based on Academic Honesty:

When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety, specifically for this class. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable. Work that has been written for personal use or other classes (past or present), including blog posts, articles or publications, may not be submitted for credit in this class even if they are your original work although you may refer to it and cite it.

You are expected to conform to the university Student Code of Conduct: www.unt.edu/csrr.

An assignment in violation will earn an automatic grade of ZERO, and depending on the severity of the infraction and the importance of the assignment, a failing grade in the course may be assigned.

Information for Journalism Majors and about Journalism Classes

Course Registration:

- Registration will begin on the dates noted in the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program.
- By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required prerequisites according to your catalog year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven't taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your prerequisites, please see an advisor.
- A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all foundational courses, and Math 1680/1681. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses.

Re-taking Failed Journalism Classes:

Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

First Class Day Attendance:

Journalism instructors reserve the right to drop any student who does not attend the first class day of the semester.

Other Information:

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) UNDERGRADUATES

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per semester. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so has the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit <http://financial.aid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with your MSOJ academic advisor or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

All first-time-in-college students at UNT are required to schedule an appointment with their Academic Advisor and receive an advising code to register for classes both fall and spring semesters of the first year in college. ALL students should meet with their Academic Advisor at least one time per long semester (Fall & Spring). It is important to update your degree plan on a regular basis to ensure that you are on track for a timely graduation.

- It is imperative that students have paid for all enrolled classes. **Please check your online schedule daily through the 12th class day (January 28) to insure you have not been dropped for non-payment of any amount.** Students unknowingly have been dropped from classes for various reasons such as financial aid, schedule change fees, parking fees, etc. MSOJ will not be able to reinstate students for any reason after the 12th class day regardless of situation. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all payments have been made.

IMPORTANT SPRING 2014 DATES*

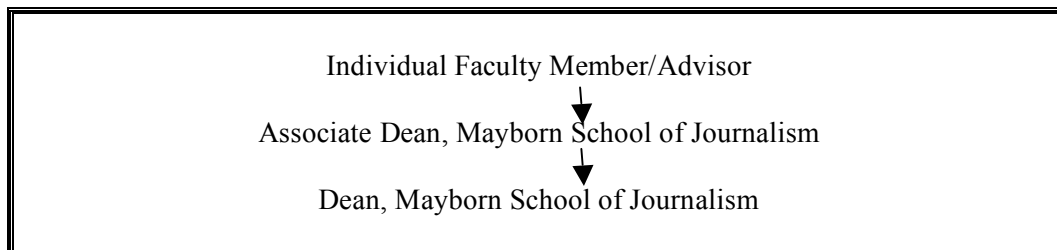
January 20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – University closed.
January 17	Last day to add a class.
January 27	Census date. Beginning this date, a student must first receive written consent of the instructor to drop a course.
February 4	Last day to drop with an automatic W. The W does not impact a student's GPA.
February 14	Spring 2014 undergraduate graduation application due.
February 21	Beginning this date, instructors may drop students with grade of WF for nonattendance.
March 10 – 14	Classes dismissed for Spring Break. University closed on March 10 only.
March 25	Last day to drop with W or WF.
March 25	Last day for an instructor to drop a student with a grade of WF for nonattendance.
Late March	Registration begins by classification for Summer 2014/Fall 2014.
April 18	Last date to withdraw from classes.
April 26	Pre-finals week begins.
May 2	Reading day. No classes.
May 3-9	Finals week.
May 9-10	Commencement – Details to be announced.

*Some dates are subject to change. Check the registrar's website for updates:

<http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide>

ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Understanding the academic organizational structure and appropriate Chain of Command is important when resolving class-related or advising issues. When you need problems resolved, please follow the step outlined below:



OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

COURSE SAFETY STATEMENTS

Students in the Mayborn School of Journalism are urged to use proper safety procedures and guidelines. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use property safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the University of North Texas is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance for this insurance program. Brochures for this insurance are available in the UNT Health and Wellness Center on campus. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medial attention at the UNT Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If you have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, please be sure that your plan covers treatment at this facility. If you choose not to go to the UNT Health and Wellness Center, you may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. You are responsible for expenses incurred there.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html.

The Mayborn School of Journalism requires that students respect and maintain all university property. Students will be held accountable through disciplinary action for any intentional damages they cause in classrooms. (e.g., writing on tables). Disruptive behavior is not tolerated (e.g., arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, talking on the phone, texting or game playing, making inappropriate comments, ringing cellular phones/beepers, dressing inappropriately).

STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS (SETE)

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available at the end of the semester to provide students a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, your instructor will communicate with you through Blackboard regarding assignments, exams, field trips, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

JOUR 3420 Spring 2014 Weekly Class Schedule*

*May be revised

WEEK 1 - 1/14, 1-16

T 1/14

Discussion: Overview. PR Agency, PR in an organization, Consultant/Freelancer perspectives. Introduction Assignments. In-class Mini Case.

TH 1/16

Discussion: Public Relations Writing and Research. In-class Mini Case.

Reading Due: **WR Chapter 1**

Assignments Due: **Introduction Assignments-Resume, Blackboard self-introduction (in third person), Personal Info Sheet**

WEEK 2 - 1/21-1/23

T 1/21

Discussion: Emails, Memos, Letters and Proposals. What makes a Good Client (components- project, campaign, event, fundraising, volunteers support, community outreach). *Requirements for Memo. Client Requirements.*

Reading Due: **WR Chapter 14**

Action: **Identify client then get Blackboard approval for client**

TH 1/23

Discussion: Emails, Memo, Letter and Proposal.

Reading Due: **WR Chapter 14**

Assignment Due: **Memo**

WEEK 3 - 1/28, 1-30

T 1/28

Discussion: Publicity photos and message/brand/ design concepts. *Fact Sheet requirements.*

Reading Due: **WR Chapters 6 and 8**

TH 1/30

Discussion: Strategic Planning/Fact Sheet/Research. *Memo requirements.*

Action: **Submit original signed client agreement in class with attached business card**

Assignment Due: **Fact Sheet**

WEEK 4 - 2/4, 2-6

T 2/4

Discussion: Theories of Persuasion

Reading Due: **WR Chapter 2 and 7**

Action: **Conduct interviews for feature story**

TH 2/6

Discussion: Theories of Persuasion cont. Branding/Design/Messaging

Reading Due: **Chapter 2 and 7 cont.**

Action: **Bring nonprofit feature story from newspaper to class in hard copy to class**

WEEK 5 – 2/11, 2/13

T 2/11

Discussion: Branding/Design/Messages
Reading Due: **WR resource**

TH 2/13

Discussion: Feature Stories. Narrative Writing.
Reading Due:
Assignment Due: **Design/Brand/Message Proposal (Logo, Brand, Tagline, Mission)**

WEEK 6 – 2/18, 2/20

T 2/18

Discussion: Media Pitch and Lists
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 10**

TH 2/20

Discussion: Background and Position Papers. *Position Paper Requirements*.
Assignments Due: **Feature Story with Photo**
Action: **Start research for position paper**

WEEK 7 – 2/25, 2/27

T 2/25

Discussion: Background and Position Paper. Review for Midterm.
Blackboard Reading Due: **Position Paper Folder**

TH 2/27

Midterm Exam: **WR Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 14 message/design/brand concepts, fact sheets, position papers, everything covered in class**

WEEK 8 – 3/4, 3/6

T 3/4

Discussion: Special Event Speaker. Media Advisory and PSA.
Reading Due: **Chapter 3 and 17**
In-class assignment: **Media Advisory for Special Event**

TH 3/6

No class
Assignment Due: **Media Advisory and PSA for Special Event**

SPRING BREAK March 10 – March 14

WEEK 9 - 3/18, 3/20

T 3/18

Discussion: Crisis Communications
Reading: **WR Chapter 3**
In-class Assignment: **Crisis Communications Response**
Action: **Revise Feature**

TH 3/20

Discussion: Finding and Creating News
Reading: **WR Chapter 3 cont**
Assignment Due: **In-class Crisis Communications Response**

WEEK 10 – 3/25, 3/27

T 3/25

Discussion: Writing/Repackaging for the Internet
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 12**
Assignment Due: **Final approved version of Feature with Internet component, Pitch and Medial List**

TH 3/27

Discussion: Writing/Repackaging for Internet
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 12 cont.**
Activity Due: **Internet Product and presentation in class**

WEEK 11 – 4/1, /3

T 4/1

Discussion: Media Releases
Reading: **WR: Chapter 4 and 5**

TH 4/3

Discussion: Working with Reporters and Blogger
Activity: **Media Prep with Reporters**
Assignment Due: **Media Release with Pitch**

WEEK 12 – 4/8, 4/10

T 4/8

Discussion: Working with Reporters and Bloggers. Exam review.
Reading Due: **WR: Chapter 19**
In-class Activity: **Presentation of Media Results**

Th 4/10

Grammar and AP Exam

WEEK 13 - 4/15, 4/17

T 4/15

Discussion: Broadcast News and Media Preparation
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 9**
In-class Assignment: **Q and A, Backgrounder, Talking Points**

TH 4/17

Discussion: Broadcast News
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 9 cont**
Assignment Due: **Q and A, Backgrounder, Talking Points**

WEEK 14 – 4/22, 4/24

T 4/22

Discussion: Ethics and Law in Public Relations
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 11 cont. and Chapter 7 Op-ed**
Blackboard Assignment Due: **Read PRSA Code of Ethics folder**
Assignment Due: **Position Paper Due**

TH 4/24

Discussion: Ethics and Law in Public Relations
Reading Due: **WR Chapter 11 cont.**
Assignment Due: **800 - word Essay**

WEEK 15 - 4/29, 5/1

T 4/29

Activity: PR Professional Speaker Panel
Assignment Due: **Professional Presentation Due (more details made available)**

Th 5/1

Discussion: Review for Final

WEEK 16 - 5/6,5/8

T 5/6

No class

TH5/8

Final 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.