

COM3413: WRITING FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Writing for Public Relations

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

3413

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English {For practicum: English and Chinese }

Medium of Assessment

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Assessment

English supplemented by Chinese

This course is designed to teach students communication skills in both English and Chinese to prepare them for a bilingual working environment.

Prerequisites

COM2201 News Writing and Reporting or COM2202 Writing for the Media

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details**Abstract**

This course aims to train students to develop the professional-level writing/production skills expected of beginning public relations practitioners. It exposes students to different approaches required for particular audiences and media, especially the ever more important online environment and social media. It also integrates public relations theory, audience research and analysis, persuasive writing into the design and production of public relations materials such as news releases, brochures, posters, flyers, web contents, PSA, media kits, etc. In the end of the class, students should be able to not only demonstrate a good understanding of the public relations writing skills, but also prepare a professional writing portfolio composed of different types of writing materials.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate knowledge regarding the role, function, and ethics in public relations writing and production	20	x	x	
2	Identify the sources of information for PR writing and production	20	x	x	
3	Justify and apply using basic information in different formats	20		x	
4	Demonstrate writing clear and concise copies in English that are accurate and logically organized with correct grammar, spelling and punctuation	40		x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will gain conceptual overview of role, function and ethics of PR writing	1 3 hours/week x 2

2	Discussion	Students will engage in group discussion on how to gather information for PR writing and production, as well as writing techniques such as use of correct grammar, spelling and punctuation	2	3 hours/week x 2
3	Analysis	Students will demonstrate analysis on various public relations materials, focusing on different ways to write with creativity for different media in English and Chinese	3	3 hours/week x 1
4	Exercise	Students will design and produce different PR materials such as, news releases, PSA, media kits, etc	4	3 hours/week x 8

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1 Quizzes & Take Home Exams: Assessment will be based on the extent to which students describe learned knowledge both correctly and analytically.	1, 2, 4	20	
2 Writing/production assignments both in English, i.e. news releases, PSA, backgrounders, newsletter, flyers, fact sheets, etc.	2, 3, 4	80	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Writing: Press releases, pitch letters, strategy documents

Criterion

CRITICAL THINKING, ANALYSIS for understanding and dealing with business' goals.
 ABLE to EXPLAIN & JUSTIFY strategy. English grammar and language understanding is essential.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Minimal

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Does not reach basic understanding.

Assessment Task

Group Projects & Presentations

Criterion

STRATEGIC THINKING and ANALYSIS to design a campaign that meets goals, is able to exert some control over a narrative and defend the reasoning.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Minimal

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Does not reach basic understanding.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

On roles, function, and the ethics of PR writing.

On how to gather information for PR writing and production, as well as writing techniques such as use of correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

On various public relations materials, focusing on different ways to write with creativity for different media in English and Chinese.

On developing different PR materials such as news releases, PSA, media kits, etc.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Charles Marsh, David W. Guth, Bonnie Short (2017). Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising and More, Routledge. (4th Edition). ISBN: 9781138037120
2	Bivins, Thomas (2010). Public Relations Writing: The Essentials of Style and Format. McGraw-Hill (New York). ISBN-10: 0073511986
3	Diggs-Brown, B. (2013). The PR Styleguide: Formats for Public Relations Practice (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Newsom, D., & Hayes, J. (2011). Public Relations Writing: Form & Style (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.
2	Associated Press Stylebook (2016)