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Syllabus for COM 310/ENL 313 Writing for Advertising and Public Relations

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COM 310 (19452)/ENL313 (19453)--Writing for Advertising and Public Relations-Spring 2022

Dr. Rachel Kovacs

Online Synchronous Tuesday/Thursday 12:20-2:15

Office Hours (Blackboard Collaborate) Thursday 11:00-12:15 and by appt.

Email: rachel.kovacs@csi.cuny.edu

Required Texts:

Please note: This is a Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) class. You may read the text and supplementary materials online or print them.

These materials are not available at the bookstore. There are supplementary PowerPoint presentations Blackboard to prepare and for your exam. They do not substitute for reading the book.

Course Text: Newsom, D., and Haynes (2008) Public Relations Writing: Form & Style (8TH Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Additional OER Materials

PDF: Sterenberg, M. (2017). Write Like a PR Pro: *Why writing is still crucial in a digital and visual world*. Specific materials are posted under Content on Blackboard.

Course Overview:

The semester's focus is on core principles and writing skills that drive public relations and advertising, as organizations grapple with a new environment and new technologies. Students will study the goals, strategies, and impact of public relations and advertising messages and construct their own messages in various formats.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To understand basic principles of public relations and advertising and different writing formats for each.
- 2) To understand what persuasion means and to create written materials that affect beliefs, attitudes, behavior.
- 3) To understand and to create messages in multiple formats for commercial and public interest purposes.
- 4) To complete a collaborate group project where everyone contributes to a public interest campaign.

Grading

The grade has the following components: attendance and participation (30% [5% is for posting review notes online, 5% for peer evaluations, 20% for attendance/participation]) one exam (10%), online blogs, discussions, and writing assignments (25%), a group semester project, including a short group presentation (25%), and a folder with shorter, reaction papers to short videos and other audiovisual material that you will see/hear (15%). Students may receive extra credit for tutoring at any center on campus and for other work, at the professor's discretion.

Standards and Formatting: Given that this is a writing class, you are expected to adhere to good writing standards-correct spelling, grammar, and mechanics. You need to proofread your work carefully and go beyond spellcheck and grammar check, which do not detect all errors. If necessary, there are options for free online tutoring to help you improve your work. You will receive extra credit for tutoring sessions, one extra credit point per 45 minutes to a one-hour session, for up to a maximum of three extra credit points.

Use, APA style, and demonstrate independent, critical thinking and credible research.

All assignments uploaded to Blackboard must be typed and double-spaced in 12-pt. font with 1" margins. Pages should be numbered. Name, title and page number go in the header.

All documents MUST BE submitted in Word or PDF format. You must save any Google Docs or other file share as Word or PDF. No other formats will be accepted by Turnitin or visible to Dr. Kovacs.

Academic Integrity

Students should read the College's policy on academic integrity (online). Plagiarism will be discussed in class. Please note that Dr. Kovacs reviews all work carefully for suspected plagiarism. Others' work, whether statistics, quotes, and original concepts, paraphrased or not, must be cited in text and in the bibliography you will submit for the group project. *Penalty for plagiarism is failure!*

Attendance

Given the fact that the course meets only twice per week and that sometimes there may not be lectures or formal class sessions, it is essential that all students attend every scheduled class session regularly and on time. The exception to this is documented illness or other extenuating circumstances. **TWO** undocumented absences will be excused; more than three absences will result in failure for any reason. **Arrival online in class more than five minutes late or leaving class more than five minutes early more than twice in the semester equals an absence; checking in and out of the Collaborate room without a valid reason is an absence.**

Special Needs

Any student who has a documented learning disability, handicapping condition, or any other special need and is registered with Center for Student Accessibility should bring me a letter indicating accommodations needed. Please do this early in the semester.

Readings are due the following session. **Chapter Notes** are due one week before the exam.

Blackboard is key to all students' grades. You must regularly log into and use Blackboard. Please consult the Help Desk at CSI (718-982-3695 or helpdesk@csi.cuny.edu) if you do not receive Blackboard emails. **GETTING ONTO BLACKBOARD AND USING IT PROPERLY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

IMPORTANT: All class emails are sent to your CSI account. Please make sure Blackboard defaults to your CSI-cix address. Course and other materials are posted on Blackboard. Discussion forums and essays have their own requirements. Consult the rubrics on Blackboard for details .

Making Up Work *If you are not in class for any reason, it is your responsibility to get the information you missed and contacting your group members to achieve this.*

Coming to Class Prepared *Please email yourself, and group members, updated copies of your work to be prepared for class and group sessions in Blackboard.*

Late Work *Any work submitted late without official documentation and prior consent of the professor will not be accepted. **No extensions given except for medical/ other emergencies. Due dates appear on the syllabus and Blackboard Assignments***

There are films/audio programs on Blackboard that you need to screen to at home. The professor has made these available free of charge at the library. You may also find them on screening services.

Virtual Class Sessions

This is a synchronous class. This means that you need to be present and fully engaged in class during the duration of the class. You cannot pass the course if you do not attend classes. You must be fully attentive during class time for Collaborate and sometimes for Zoom. Links will be posted and emailed. Attendance will be taken and count heavily towards your grade. If you come late, drop, or leave early during Collaborate you will be marked absent. If you have your icon on without participating, you are "checked out."

Course Schedule

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to date changes due to guest lectures and other circumstances and assignments may be modified during the semester, as per need.

Jan. 31- Introduction: What do you know about PR and Advertising? What it does in a Rapidly Shifting World; Historical and Contemporary Contexts for PR.

Objectives: To review the syllabus, schedule, and expectations for the course.

To discuss how public relations is defined and where it is used.

To share anything we have done, paid or unpaid, that represents PR and advertising

Assignments: PowerPoint 1

Complete the group *Introductions* discussion forum (read the Rubric for Discussions before you do.)

Discuss your background, hobbies, education, training, and aspirations for the future. Also, exchange contact information with your group members--post your info on the *Contacts* forum. **Due 2/2.**

View: *Our Brand is Crisis* - Upload Essay, Word or PDF only, under *Assignments*- due as link, 2/14

Feb. 2- What is Public Relations? To explore various ways to connect and build relationships with publics; Getting Organized for Writing.

Objectives: To understand important principles and practices relevant to writing effective messages.

Assignments: Read Newsome and Haynes (N&H) pp. 107-150

In the **Group Discussions** Forum, describe some of the way that COVID has affected your life and those of your loved ones. What about your experiences do you think others share with you and might be effectively addressed in a public forum? **Due 2/7.**

Feb. 7-Persuasion: What is it and how does it work? Part I: Theories of Persuasion

Objective: To understand theories that help to explain the persuasive process

Assignment: Read N&H, pp. 40-53

In **Group Discussions:** Paste Complete Persuasion versus Coercion handout into Discussions.

Also in **Group Discussions:** Your group should choose one public health issue. Do you see a way that a persuasive technique might be an effective public relations tactic to address the issue? **Both Due 2/9**

Feb. 9-Persuasion Part II, Additional Persuasive Devices and Propaganda

Objectives: To explain additional persuasive techniques and propaganda's use and misuse.

To consider the role of public relations in public issues

Assignment: Pick a news item relevant to you; **Group Discussions**, Why is it newsworthy? **Due 2/14**

Feb. 14-Postscript on Persuasion: Finding and Making News

Objective: To further discuss public interest/political persuasion and "newsworthiness."

Assignments: Read N&H, Chapter 1.

View: *Wag the Dog*. Upload Essay, Word, or PDF only, under *Assignments*-**Due 3/7.**

Feb. 16- News Releases and Fact Sheets

Objective: To learn the basics of news releases and fact sheets and apply them

Assignments: Read N&H, Chapter 9; Roberts, Press Release Files in Blackboard Content

Write a news release on one of the topics under Assignments--upload to link **Due 2/21.**

Feb. 21-**NO CLASS--CLASSES FOLLOW A MONDAY SCHEDULE**

Assignment: Read How to be a PR Pro on Social Media Writing, Blackboard Content

View: *Thank You for Smoking*. Upload Essay, Word, or PDF only, under *Assignments*-**Due 3/28**

Feb. 23--Fact Sheets

Objective: To further explain fact sheets and their relationship to news releases

Assignments: Read Fact Sheet material on Blackboard Content and in N&H

Create a fact sheet based on the same details as your news release. **Due 2/28**

Feb. 28- Pitches

Objective: To understand how to pitch to a specific media outlet.

Assignment: Read pitch letter material on Blackboard Content

Create a brief pitch letter. Upload both items to the link on Assignments link . **Due 3/14**

Mar. 7- Why Bother to Do Research?

Objective: to consider research strategies for the group project.

Assignment: Decide on research subtopics and post on the Group Forum in Blackboard. **Due 3/9**

Mar.9 – Blogging for Websites and Papers

Assignments: Read Chapter 4, *How to Write Like a PR Pro*

Pick any fictitious non-profit that appeals to you (e.g., animal rescue, recovery house, etc.). Under Group Discussion and write the copy for the About section of the Website (approx. 200 words). **Due**

3/13

Mar. 14- Social Media

Objective: To understand responsible/effective use of social media for instant and max audience reach, and the social media a[s kf.

Social Media, Mobile Apps and their Limitations;_Newsletters

Assignment: Social Media, Mobile Apps and Their Limitations;_Newsletters

Mar. 16- Feature Stories

Objective: distinguish between short form and narrative pieces and newspaper articles.

Assignment: Feature Story due as upload **Due 3/23**

Mar. 21-Feature Stories (continued); Blogs

Assignment Consider the organization for your project and write a blog that is critical of it--no more than 250 words **Due 3/30**

Mar. 23- PSAs

Objective: To write targeted messages on a Website and create a blog to pique reader interest;

Create the copy for a video public service announcement; look under Content on Blackboard

Mar. 28

Assignment: Submit all three film reaction papers-ONE Word or PDF document-upload to Semester Essays link in **Target Date for Grading Discussions 4/Assignments-Due 11:59, 3/28.**

In Social Media Upload, each group member should post copy for one event in different social media. **Due 3/30.**

Mar. 30- Newsletters; Brochures

Using a Word template, create a one-page newsletter about employee activities. Due 4/3.

April 4-13: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES-DRIVE CAREFULLY AND HAVE FUN

Apr. 14: Continue Brochures; Review for Exam; Group Conferences (Time Permitting)

Assignments-- one-page brochure about your group's organization Due 4/18

Chapter Review Notes Due on Main Discussion Board 4/14 at 10 PM

Apr. 18: EXAM; Advertising as an Auxiliary to Public Relations Campaigns

Objective: To explore how advertising assists in the dissemination of public relations messages

Apr. 20- Annotated Bibliographies

Apr. 25: Outlines; Possible Speaker

May 4- Review of Bibliographies and Outline; Final Copies Must Be Posted under Group Forums 11:59 PM;

May 6- Group Time to Work on Presentations;

Copies of All Papers for Final Project Due as Upload to Turnitin

May 11- Zoom Session: FINAL PRESENTATIONS BEGIN

May 16- Zoom Session: FINAL PRESENTATIONS CONTINUE, **CLASSES END**

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!