

COM 351-01

Spring 2015

WF 01.40

Central 153

Salem
State
University

*Service-
learning

public relations writing



Course description.

This course deals with the written expression of public relations strategies, tactics and programs. Students will explore and produce traditional written vehicles including news releases, pitch letters, reports and brochures, as well as new and emerging web-based and social media tools. **Prerequisite:** COM 349

Required texts.

Bivins, T. (2013). *Public relations writing: The essentials of style and format* (8th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Silverman, J.; Hughes, E.; & Roberts Wienbroer, D. (2008). *Rules of thumb: A guide for writers*. New York: McGraw Hill.

The Associated Press
Stylebook, 2013 edition

Policies.

Communication

Please allow a 48-hour response time for me to reply to your emails. You may contact me via text message but please remember to include your name in the text so I know with whom I am corresponding.

Late Assignments

I will deduct up to 5 percent per day late for all late assignments. Any work that is not made up within 20 days of the original due date will not be accepted. No late assignments will be accepted after the last day of class.

Participation

If you are unprepared for or disruptive to the class you will lose participation points.

contact info

Dr. Cindy S. Vincent, Ph.D.
cindy.vincent@salemstate.edu
CC 149
Wednesday & Friday
10-10:30 a.m., 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Office: (978) 542-7089
Mobile: (916) 233-8184

grading

Quizzes	9%
In-Class Writing Exercises	12%
PR Notebook	12%
Term Project & Presentation	46%
Final Exam	9%
Participation	12%

Grading

I will not discuss any grades for any assignment on the day I hand it back nor will I discuss grades in the classroom. All discussions will take place in my office at least 24 hours after the grade is received.

Course assignments.

Writing/AP Style Quizzes

There will be four writing/AP style quizzes this semester, two in-class quizzes and two take-home quizzes via Canvas.

In-Class Writing Exercises

You will participate in various in-class writing exercises and timed writing sessions that support course content and learning.

PR Notebook

Every week you will be required to practice reflexive writing and keep track of it in an online “notebook” blog.

Term Project

Over the course of the semester you will learn and explore different kinds of PR writing genres, to include:

- Press release
- Communication audit

- Fact sheet
- Brochure
- Media kit
- Pitch letter

You will work with a community organization for at least one of these genres as part of the service-learning component of this course.

At the end of the semester you will present your media kit to the class and your community partner. In addition, for each PR genre (except media kit and pitch letter) you will engage in the revision process to learn through feedback from your class peers, community partner, and the course professor.

Final Exam

Your final exam will address all of the genres we cover this semester.

Extra Credit

Every student has the opportunity to earn 15 extra credit points for: 1) being on time to every class and staying the full duration of the class period, and 2) attending every class. More opportunities may arise throughout the semester at the professor’s discretion.



Service-Learning.

Service-learning at Salem State is a teaching methodology in which students learn through thoughtfully organized service and structured reflection tied directly to academic objectives.

Service activities, conducted with and meeting the needs of a community partner, foster civic responsibility and deepen academic understanding.

Over the course of the semester you will work with a community partner that will fill a community need and support the Salem State mission. Through this project you will practice what you learn in class and make a contribution to the world we all live in.



Source: <http://hqdesktop.net>

Course goals.

G1. Build on knowledge gained in previous writing courses, specifically in terms of writing processes, writing conventions and an understanding of what writing is and does.

G2. Use writing as a tool for learning and thinking about public relations.

G3. Experience writing as a process.

Learning objectives.

LO1. Complete a survey of writing formats specific to the public relations field.

LO2. Learn to write effectively and professionally for various purposes, genres and audiences.

LO3. Receive and respond to feedback from peers and instructor during the drafting and/or revision stages of the writing process.

LO4. Reflect on writing, writing processes, and relationships between writing and learning.

LO5. Complete exams to convey competency in writing rules, formats, and genres.

LO6. Incorporate digital media technologies with traditional public relations writing strategies and techniques.

The fine print.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a Salem State University student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Charges of academic dishonesty are reviewed through a process that allows for student learning and impartial review. Performing, aiding or inciting any of the actions listed under the full academic dishonesty policy constitutes an offense subject to disciplinary action. For more information, visit: catalog.salemstate.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=2098

Reasonable Accommodation

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids and adjustments. Any student who has a documented disability requiring an accommodation, aid or adjustment should speak with me immediately. Students with disabilities should provide documentation to and schedule an appointment with the Office for Students with Disabilities and obtain appropriate services. If you have a disability and will need accommodations to complete course requirements, please contact disability services in Berry Library & Learning Commons Room 20

University Declared Critical Emergency

In the event of a University declared critical emergency, Salem State University reserves the right to alter this course plan. Students should refer to www.salemstate.edu for further information and updates.

Title IX & Sexual Assault

The university recognizes that sexual misconduct and power based violence (sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking) is a very traumatic crime and as such it will endeavor to work with students who are victims to reduce fears and concerns regarding their personal safety. Any individual who believes he/she may have experienced sexual harassment or any type of sexual aggression may receive important information and assistance regarding the university's policies and responsive processes. In addition, upon request, the student conduct office will make resources available regarding who can discuss the process and what it means. For a list of university resources, visit: www.salemstate.edu/27036.php



Source: Antonio Litterio

Spring 2015 Tentative* Course Schedule

**This schedule is subject to change*

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
Week 1		
1/21	Syllabus, Course Overview, Introductions	
1/23	PR Writing & Pre-writing	Chapter 1
Week 2		
1/28	Ethics, Persuasion & the Law	Chapter 2
1/30	Research & Audience Analysis <i>Communication Audit Assigned</i>	Chapter 3
Week 3		
2/4	Writing: Nuts and Bolts How to build a sentence	<i>Rules of Thumb</i> p. 3-30 (Canvas) <i>PR Style Guide</i> p. 205-206
2/6	AP Style: A Primer How to format information	<i>Rules of Thumb</i> p. 31-58 (Canvas) <i>PR Style Guide</i> AP Style Take Home Writing Quiz
Week 4		
2/11	Inverted Pyramid: Style & Format <i>Writing Quiz</i>	Inverted_pyramid.pdf (Canvas)
2/13	Press Releases	Chapter 6 Take Home AP Style Quiz Communication Audit
Week 5		
2/18	New Media Blogs, Microblogs, & Twitter <i>AP Style Quiz</i>	Chapter 11
2/20	Workshop: Press Releases	Draft Press Release 1
Week 6		
2/25	Fact Sheets	
2/27	Design, Images, & Multimedia	Chapter 7
Week 7		
3/4	<i>Workshop: Fact Sheets</i>	Draft Fact Sheet
3/6	Key Messages	Chapter 4 Final Press Release 1

Week 8		
3/11	Process Writing	Process.pdf (Canvas)
3/13	Feature Writing: Writing Engaging Content	Final Fact Sheet
Week 9		
— <i>SPRING BREAK</i> —		
Week 10		
3/25	Brochures	Chapter 8 Draft Press Release 2
3/27	Editing	Editing.pdf (Canvas)
Week 11		
4/1	<i>Workshop: Brochure</i>	Draft Brochure
4/3	Newsletters	
Week 12		
4/8	Media Relations	Chapter 5 Final Press Release 2
4/10	Professional presentations	Chapter 10
Week 13		
4/15	Television and Radio	Chapter 9 Final Brochure
4/17	<i>Media Kit Workshop</i>	
Week 14		
4/22	Presentations	Media Kit
4/24	Presentations	
Week 15		
4/29	Communication Plan	PR_Plan.pdf (Canvas)
5/1	Final Exam Review	
May 5-12 FINAL EXAM Date and time TBD. Check Canvas for details.		