

Writing For Strategic Communication

COMM 2321,

Fall 2023

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 11:10-12:30

Instructor: Dan Farkas

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Telephone: 614-668-8921 (cell)

Office: Journalism 313

Office Hours: They will be virtual. The best bet is to schedule a 15-minute block with <https://calendly.com/danfarkas614> and I'll set up a 1-1 Zoom session.

Read this. Know this: I will be on medical leave for much of this semester to care for an ailing parent. That means during most of the semester, I will not be available Monday and Thursday. That means I won't answer emails until the next day. There is plenty to do during that time. This is a hybrid class, and that means there are several hours of work outside of class. Successful students will put in that work and show up when we meet in person.

Course Overview: Strategic communication can't work if you can't write. This course breaks down key components of successful strategic communication writing: business (getting and keeping the work), news, public relations, and digital copywriting.

We will also discuss specialized research in each genre to make sure your work reaches the proper audience on appropriate platform. Completing this in an ethical and legal capacity will be a constant theme throughout the term.

Learning to write factually, concisely and on deadline takes practice. The more you do it, the better and faster you become. This is a high-intensity course designed to prepare you for the deadlines and forms of writing required in a professional environment. Opportunities for writing a variety of types of copy for print, broadcast media, web and public relations will be incorporated into the assignments. This course also will give you an appreciation for the importance of being a strong editor and giving constructive feedback to other writers.

We will also demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relations to media communications. In addition, we will demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy, students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and

assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average. [ASC Honors provides](#) an excellent guide to scheduling and study expectations.

Course Objectives

- Learn fundamental concepts of news gathering and news writing and understand how these translate into other professional areas of communication
- Strengthen ability to write factually, concisely, and effectively, and to help others do the same through strong editing
- Develop proficiency in Associate Press Stylebook rules and application
- Improve ability to effectively manage time and balance multiple tasks
- Prepare for writing and copyediting tests required by most employers
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively, and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Course Format and Success Tools: Class sessions may include, but are not limited to, discussions, team exercises, article critiques, reviews of online materials, lectures, guest speakers and out-of-class lab work. My intention is to meet live in as much as possible. That, as with everything in this pandemic, is subject to change. Previous distance learning and hybrid courses have provided insights from students on how to improve the learning experience and optimize outcomes. Here are a few tips from previous students to encourage your success in this hybrid course:

- Students kept up with the schedule and assignment due dates.
- Students made sure they had access to a reliable internet connection.
- Students had access to at least one reliable device and a backup plan in case of a technological issue.
- Students have made plans to back up work. OSU provides free access to data storage through BuckeyeBox and Microsoft One Drive.
- Students reported that completing assigned readings before class helped them to be prepared to follow along with lectures and participate in discussions.

- Students scheduled time to complete activities at a steady pace during the week. Keeping a schedule prevented a last-minute rush and kept the workload manageable.
- Students approached the material by thinking about the connections between readings, lectures, and assignments.
- Students followed the instructor's preference for camera and microphone settings during online synchronous meetings. In this class, that means having your camera on during class. Students will get one free warning to turn on their camera. After that, I will remove students from Zoom, and the student will not be allowed to reenter.

Texts

Writing for Strategic Communication Industries. This book is free; you can download it here. <https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/stratcommwriting/>

The Associated Press Stylebook. I hope you already have one. You'll use it in COMM 3334 and 4337. You're responsible for the most updated AP Style rules in this class and when you interview for jobs. [A link for the online version is here for \\$32.](#)

Hybrid Course Expectations

This course will have in-person and online components, but students should plan to attend class LIVE IN PERSON during all scheduled class periods.

- Do not schedule work or other commitments during class periods.
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Have access to reliable Wi-Fi and take responsibility for ensuring you can access online resources such as video/audio materials and quizzes. You have access to course expectations and deadlines in advance, and the Carmen team and I are available to help with technical issues PRIOR to due dates. Refer to <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmencanvas> for answers to many Carmen problems or questions for the Carmen support team.

Be active in Carmen, which means accessing our course online multiple times per week as I don't see you live every class period and may post updates or announcements. The class includes a group-based project worth a significant portion of your grade, so this also ensures you remain connected to and active within your group. The module for each week will provide assigned readings, needed materials and assignments for that week (i.e., due dates for discussion posts and reminders for upcoming quizzes/exams/assignments).

You must complete all assigned readings BEFORE coming to class each week. This will help ensure you don't lose points in online discussions/reading quizzes and are ready to begin applying concepts during our limited time together in class. Quizzes are due by the start of class, as noted on the syllabus. DO NOT collaborate with classmates on quizzes.

Bring a computer, pens, and paper to any in-person classes so you can access online materials, discussions and in person writing resources.

Submitted Work Format (MANDATORY)

I've worked with dozens of clients. They all have their own format. Because they pay me, I follow their format. Because I don't want you to receive unnecessary criticism at your dream internship or job, you should learn how to follow formatting.

Unless otherwise noted, assignments will follow this format: Arial font, 12 point, single-spaced with a space between paragraphs and black text color. Submit all assignments through Carmen. I will not open and read assignments anywhere but Carmen.

File Naming Protocol: studentlastname--assignmentname. (For example, student Jane Smith is turning in the draft of her news release. Her file should be named: smith--newsrelease)

If submitted work doesn't follow this format, there will be an automatic deduction of ten percentage points.

Attendance and Participation: I take attendance in every class because students who regularly attend do better. I use Top Hat because it's easy. Here's the [Top Hat help guide](#) if it's new to you. Attendance is not part of your final grade. It is my way of knowing how involved you are in class. Again, students who regularly attend do better.

As presented in the university's "Academic Policies and Procedures," university-excused absences include "illness, death in the immediate family, religious observance, jury duty, and involvement in University—sponsored activities." Discuss any situation with the instructor, and every effort will be made to assist in this requirement.

The only way to receive an assignment extension is with some kind of written verification, be it a doctor's note, obituary, or university approved document.

Let me stress this again. If there's an issue with physical or mental health of your or someone you know, let me know once the problem arises, not after the fact.

On days we meet live, attendance closes five minutes after the class begins. Employers encouraged me to promote promptness, and this is my way of doing that. When we meet through Zoom, you will start in a waiting room. I will admit everyone when class begins and stop admitting people five minutes after the start of class.

Mental Health Statement: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Academic Integrity Policy:

- **Cheating and Plagiarism:** Don't. This class is about creating original work. It's OK to collaborate with others in proofreading your original work. You can't collaborate on drafting assignments or taking quizzes. Many of you will work with organizations that have established content. You can't submit that content as your own. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing work will receive a zero on the assignment. This could also fall under Academic Misconduct.
- **Reusing past work:** You are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me. Anyone caught reusing past work will receive a zero on the assignment.
- **Falsifying research or results:** All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was. Anyone falsifying research or results will receive a zero on the assignment.
- **Academic Misconduct:** It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

Title IX: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Interim Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Molly Peirano, at titleix@osu.edu

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities: The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu ; 614- 292-3307; slds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Additional Support: The Writing Center offers free help with writing at any stage of the writing process for any member of the university community. During our sessions,

consultants can work with you on anything from research papers to lab reports, from dissertations to résumés, from proposals to application materials. Appointments are available in-person at 4120 Smith Lab, as well as for online sessions. You may schedule an in-person or online appointment by visiting WOnline or by calling 614-688-4291. Please note that the Writing Center also offers daily walk-in hours—no appointment necessary—in Thompson Library. You do not have to bring in a piece of writing in order to schedule a writing center appointment. Many students report that some of their most productive sessions entail simply talking through ideas. Please check out our Individual Writing Support and Group Writing Support pages for the types of consultations we provide. We also maintain a Writing Resources page with writing handouts and links to online resources.

Student Services: Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml> The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

Diversity: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Course Technology: For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Carmen:** Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit Carmen.osu.edu. Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
 - Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
 - This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.
 - [Carmen accessibility](#)
- **Secured Media Library**

- Some of the videos for this course will be posted in the University's Secured Media Library. The link will be posted on the class Carmen page and you will be automatically directed to the correct video.
- [Secured Media Library](#) help guide
- **Carmen Zoom:**
 - Office hours will be held through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. A separate guide to accessing Carmen Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under Files.
 - Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Carmen Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor or TA in the virtual office hours room.
 - [Carmen Zoom](#) help guide
- **Turnitin:**
 - Students at The Ohio State University are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Therefore, you should be familiar with the guidelines provided by the [Committee on Academic Misconduct \(COAM\)](#) and [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see [the vendor's guide for students](#). Note that submitted final papers become part of the OSU database.
- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** 8help@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection
- Web cam and microphone

Necessary software

- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages have these abilities.
- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733

Grading: There is a writing rubric for each assignment that you can find on Carmen. I evaluate written materials on their conciseness, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, logic and persuasion. Please note: This class adheres to AP Style. Here are guidelines regarding misspellings, fact errors, poor sentence construction, grammar and style mistakes:

- Proofreading matters. Every grammar, punctuation, and AP Style mistake will result in at least a two-percentage point deduction from your grade.
- Issues with content development, logic flaws, lack of research or other structural issues will result in at least a four-percentage point deduction.
- I list steps for every assignment in the PP and in class. If you miss a step, you will lose at least a letter grade.
- Misspelling any name (Lebron vs. LeBron) results in an automatic F.

Guidelines on how I evaluate work:

100-90 With a few minor edits, piece could be sent as is.

89-80 Moderate editing tightening. Some typos & style mistakes.

79-70 Work needs significant editing, revision.

69-60 Start over. Piece is sloppy, mistake filled and/or ill conceived.

59 and below: Work does not conform to assignment.

Assignment	Points
Written Assignments	400
Exams	200
Effort Assignments	100
Style Final	100
TOTAL	800 Points

I don't round up on points, and there will be two extra credit opportunities. Here is the grading scale.

- A 93% and higher A- 90-92.9%
- B+ 87-89.9% B 83-86.9% B-80-82.9%
- C+ 77-79.9% C 73-76.9% C-70-72.9%
- D+ 67-69.9% D 63-66.9% D-60-62.9%
- F 0-59.9%

Late Work, Missing Work, Make-ups and Extension Requests: Work must be submitted by the assigned deadline. In the real world, deadlines matter. If work is due at 12:00 and it is submitted at 12:01, it's late. The only extensions I offer involve the attendance and health policy in the above paragraph. Work will be downgraded ten percentage points for every day late, including weekends.

Assignment Overviews:

Writing Prompt Effort Assignment

In an internship or job, it is mandatory that you show up and give a strong effort every day to learn and grow new skills.

This course adopts the same mentality as it is designed to begin bridging the gap between the academic and professional worlds. The writing and exercises we do during scheduled class time allow students to put class concepts into action and learn by doing with the benefit of peer and instructor review, feedback and discussion.

Students will receive either a satisfactory, unsatisfactory grade, or zero. Satisfactory is full credit (eg 10/10.) Unsatisfactory is partial credit (eg. 8/10.) Students who don't attend will earn 0. The only way to receive an assignment extension is with some form of written verification, be it a doctor's note, obituary, or university approved document.

In every assignment you turn in, I will evaluate written materials on their conciseness, thoroughness, thoughtfulness, logic, and persuasion. This class adheres to AP Style. Misspellings, fact errors, poor sentence construction, grammar, and style mistakes will have the following consequences.

- Proofreading matters. Ideal assignments will have 0-1 grammatical and style errors. Satisfactory work will have 2-4 errors. Unsatisfactory work will have 5 or more errors.
- Structure matters. Ideal assignments will have 0 structural issues. This includes content development, logic flaws, lack of research, or other structural issues. Satisfactory work will have 1-2 structural issues. Unsatisfactory work will have 3 or more errors.

Written Assignments: My goal in this class is for you to have a writing sample or portfolio in hand when you leave. These writing assignments are opportunities to practice what we talk about in class and implement core skills any strategic communication writer must have if they want a job in the industry. All assignments and rubrics are in Carmen. I've also copied and pasted them here

Memo:

Purpose: *Regardless of what career path you choose, we will have to correspond internally with our teams and externally with our clients. Employers cite ineffective e-mail communication as a leading barrier to success and a cause of frustration. This assignment takes the core ideas of successful writers and applies them in a way all of you will use, be it group projects later this term, internships you will have this summer, or even in the jobs you have right now.*

Knowledge and Skills:

- o *Understanding basic disciplinary writing skills*
- o *Understanding and writing basics before every putting pen to paper*
- o *Finding ways to be concise and thorough, making the most of word count*
- o *Showcasing ways to differentiate copy*
- o *Finding ways to increase the probability the people reading your message will retain the information you want them to retain*

Task:

Please write a one-page memo outlining the five most important things you learned from this class this semester. Remember the following criteria from the syllabus and consider the following questions when writing:

1. *Is there a beginning, middle and end?*
2. *What is the tone?*
3. *Did you break down your copy in a digital friendly way?*
4. *Are you concise and thorough?*
5. *Did you get rid of passive voice and forced present tense?*
6. *Did you take a Diet Coke break?*

Criteria for Success:

In class, we will review successful examples of an effective memo.

Students will have a chance to grade good, average, and poor memos to understand my criteria for grading the assignment.

Students will also have a working class where they can show me a sample and work with others on proofing their copy.

All PP will be online, along with video summaries of the content discussed in class.

Excellent work will follow the steps listed in the PP, successfully execute those steps and have few, if any, errors for passive voice, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Average work will likely have grammatical errors listed above and omit or improperly execute the steps listed in the PP.

Subpar work will forget steps, have numerous grammatical errors, and have formatting issues fully addressed in the syllabus.

<i>Memo Rubric</i>	<i>Number of Errors</i>	<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Total Points Lost</i>
<i>Grammar</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Content Assignment Steps</i>		<i>4% for each theoretical error. This would be going against the steps in the reading, PP, and videos. 10% per missed step.</i>	
<i>Content Accuracy</i>		<i>4% for each error. This would involve including information that isn't accurate.</i>	
<i>Assignment Formatting</i>		<i>10% per syllabus guidelines.</i>	
<i>Misspelled Names</i>		<i>Automatic F</i>	

News Article:

Purpose: *Regardless of what career path you choose, we will have to write content that reaches and audience. Maybe it's working at a media outlet. Maybe it's internal communication. Maybe it's working with media. We can't do this work if we don't feel comfortable understanding what news is and how to accurately report it. This assignment is about building the core elements of strategic writing communication so you can work on other elements you will use in your career. We're building a foundation that will help you be a better writer and citizen.*

Knowledge and Skills:

- Understanding basic disciplinary writing skills and building off the lessons of the last assignment
- Understanding the research you need to do to write a good article and how to attribute that information to the correct source
Finding ways to be concise and thorough, making the most of word count
- Starting the process of understanding AP Style
Knowing what news is and how to connect your news values to the audience

Task: Please write a basic news story as we outlined in class. I have a definition attached below that can also help explain different types of news stories. If I were in your shoes, how would I start?

- What do I care about?
- Who is my audience? LANTERN/OSU STUDENTS
- What are the news values? AT LEAST....
- How can I find the who, what, when and where?
- How can I find the why and how (a tougher task)?
- **Start digging.**
- **You aren't a source. I don't want your opinion.**
- **Other media outlets aren't sources.**
- **Tell me something I don't know.**

In addition to the syllabus' general grading overview, I added some national guidelines to help with specific story elements.

LEAD: The Lead (Introduction) answers all or most of the 5Ws and 1H questions or is appropriate for this type of news article; the most important information is here.

BODY/GUTS: The body captures the reader's attention through the use of colorful, striking and meaningful words and phrases. In addition, the body paragraphs feature the appropriate main ideas; use effective transitions; and make use of quotations with proper attribution for all news sources.

ORGANIZATION: The writer has chosen a method of organization, appropriate to the topic of the news article, most generally inverted pyramid. You have the option of using

the diamond format. The writer has managed to present the material in an orderly development of words, sentences, and paragraphs to create a clear and unified composition following the most appropriate pattern of this type of news article.

MECHANICS: Writer has used acceptable patterns on the following areas: 1.) Spelling 2.) Punctuation 3.) Grammar/Style/Usage 4.) Consistent Active Voice/Tone 5.) Presentation/Appearance (See Syllabus for formatting)

Criteria for Success:

In class, we will review successful examples of an effective news article

Students will have a chance to grade good, average, and poor news articles to understand my criteria for grading the assignment.

Students will also have a working class where they can show me a sample and work with others on proofing their copy.

All PP will be online, along with video summaries of the content discussed in class.

Excellent work will follow the steps listed in the PP, successfully execute those steps and have few, if any, errors for passive voice, grammar, spelling, and punctuation and the first 10 slides of the AP Style deck.

Average work will likely have grammatical errors listed above and omit or improperly execute the steps listed in the PP.

Subpar work will forget steps, have numerous grammatical errors, and have formatting issues fully addressed in the syllabus.

News Article Rubric	Number of Errors	Penalty	Total Points Lost
<i>Grammar</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Lack of Attribution</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Three Source Minimum</i>		<i>4% with only two credible sources 20% deduction for one credible source. F for no sources</i>	

<i>Content Assignment Steps</i>		<i>4% for each theoretical error. This would be going against the steps in the reading, PP, and videos. 10% per missed step</i>	
<i>Content Accuracy</i>		<i>4% for each error. This would involve including information that isn't accurate.</i>	
<i>Assignment Formatting</i>		<i>10% per syllabus guidelines.</i>	
<i>Misspelled Names</i>		<i>Automatic F</i>	

Media Kit:

Purpose: *Regardless of what career path you choose, we will have to write content that reaches and audience. Maybe it's working at a media outlet. Maybe it's internal communication. Maybe it's working with media. We can't do this work if we don't feel comfortable understanding what news is and how to accurately report it. This assignment is about building the core elements of strategic writing communication so you can work on other elements you will use in your career. We're building a foundation that will help you bet a better writer and citizen.*

Knowledge and Skills:

- Understanding basic disciplinary writing skills and building off the lessons of the last assignment
- Understanding the research you need to do to write a good article and how to attribute that information to the correct source
Finding ways to be concise and thorough, making the most of word count
- Starting the process of understanding AP Style
Knowing what news is and how to connect your news values to the audience

Task:

You will write a basic media kit for an organization. It can't be a PRactice client.

1. I want you to write a pitch letter/email to a real journalist who would have interest in covering this event.
2. Write a news release
3. Please submit in one word file through Carmen.

We discussed four steps to writing a good pitch email and seven steps on writing a news release. I'll use that criteria and the syllabus guidelines to grade this assignment.

Some common questions:

- How long? The news release should be at least 400 words. The pitch email will be brief; we saw in class how short they can be.
- How do I find a client? Think about student causes, non-profits, places where you worked in the past, or local businesses. Do not pick a national brand or you will fail the assignment.
- What about photos and video? For this assignment, don't worry about it.

In addition to the syllabus' general grading overview. I added some national guidelines to help with specific story elements.

LEAD: The Lead (Introduction) answers all or most of the 5Ws and 1H questions or is appropriate for this type of news article; the most important information is here.

BODY/GUTS: The body captures the reader's attention through the use of colorful, striking and meaningful words and phrases. In addition, the body paragraphs feature the appropriate main ideas; use effective transitions; and make use of quotations with proper attribution for all news sources.

ORGANIZATION: The writer has chosen a method of organization, appropriate to the topic of the news article, most generally inverted pyramid. You have the option of using the diamond format. The writer has managed to present the material in an orderly development of words, sentences and paragraphs to create a clear and unified composition following the most appropriate pattern of this type of news article.

MECHANICS: Writer has used acceptable patterns on the following areas: 1.) Spelling 2.) Punctuation 3.) Grammar/Style/Usage 4.) Consistent Active Voice/Tone 5.) Presentation/Appearance (See Syllabus for formatting)

Criteria for Success:

In class, we will review successful examples of a media kit

Students will have a chance to grade good, average, and poor media kits to understand my criteria for grading the assignment.

Students will also have a working class where they can show me a sample and work with others on proofing their copy.

All PP will be online, along with video summaries of the content discussed in class.

Excellent work will follow the steps listed in the PP, successfully execute those steps and have few, if any, errors for passive voice, grammar, spelling, and punctuation and the first 20 slides of the AP Style deck.

Average work will likely have grammatical errors listed above and omit or improperly execute the steps listed in the PP.

Subpar work will forget steps, have numerous grammatical errors, and have formatting issues fully addressed in the syllabus.

Media Kit Rubric	Number of Errors	Penalty	Total Points Lost
<i>Grammar</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Lack of Attribution</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Three Source Minimum</i>		<i>4% with only two credible sources 20% deduction for one credible source. F for no sources</i>	

<i>Content Assignment Steps</i>		<i>4% for each theoretical error. This would be going against the steps in the reading, PP, and videos. 10% per missed step</i>	
<i>Content Accuracy</i>		<i>4% for each error. This would involve including information that isn't accurate.</i>	
<i>Assignment Formatting</i>		<i>10% per syllabus guidelines.</i>	
<i>Misspelled Names</i>		<i>Automatic F</i>	

Blog/Inbound Marketing Assignment:

Purpose: *Every single person reading this will write something for the internet. This assignment builds on the skills you developed all term and gives you a chance to showcase the digital fundamentals needed to create a writing sample and showcase your fundamental understanding of what digital content looks like.*

Knowledge and Skills:

- Understanding basic disciplinary writing skills and building off the lessons of the last assignment
- Understanding the research you need to do to write and source meaningful content
- Finding ways to be concise and thorough, making the most of word count
- Showcasing the core standards of AP Style
- Knowing what news is and how to connect your news values to the audience

Task:

Write an inbound/content marketing piece on something that matters to you. This should be 600-1000 words. In terms of grading, here are questions I will review when grading your work.

- **Keywords:** Do you have 3-5 key terms. Are they specific? Are they in the beginning, middle and end of the post?
- Did you find videos, photos or other things to help accentuate the story. You don't have to create these and can easily find them online.
- Do you have enough external links based on our conversation. Also, are there internal links to the client you choose? You need one link for every 75-100 words
- Did you follow syllabus guidelines on submitting documents?

In addition to the syllabus' general grading overview. I added some national guidelines to help with specific story elements.

1. **LEAD:** The Lead (Introduction) answers all or most of the 5Ws and 1H questions or is appropriate for this type of news article; the most important information is here.
2. **BODY/GUTS:** The body captures the reader's attention through the use of colorful, striking and meaningful words and phrases. In addition, the body paragraphs feature the appropriate main ideas; use effective transitions; and make use of quotations with proper attribution for all news sources.
3. **ORGANIZATION:** The writer has chosen a method of organization, appropriate to the topic of the news article, most generally inverted pyramid. You have the option of using the diamond format. The writer has managed to present the material in an orderly development of words, sentences and paragraphs to create a clear and unified composition following the most appropriate pattern of this type of news article.

4. **MECHANICS:** Writer has used acceptable patterns on the following areas: 1.) Spelling 2.) Punctuation 3.) Grammar/Style/Usage 4.) Consistent Active Voice/Tone 5.) Presentation/Appearance (See Syllabus for formatting)

<i>Blog Rubric</i>	<i>Number of Errors</i>	<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Total Points Lost</i>
<i>Grammar</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Lack of Attribution</i>		<i>0 for first mistake. 2% for each subsequent deduction</i>	
<i>Three Source Minimum</i>		<i>4% with only two credible sources 20% deduction for one credible source. F for no sources</i>	
<i>Content Assignment Steps</i>		<i>4% for each theoretical error. This would be going against the steps in the reading, PP, and videos. 10% per missed step</i>	
<i>Content Accuracy</i>		<i>4% for each error. This would involve including information that isn't accurate.</i>	
<i>Assignment Formatting</i>		<i>10% per syllabus guidelines.</i>	
<i>Misspelled Names</i>		<i>Automatic F</i>	

Exams: There will be two in person exams. The multiple choice/true false questions will be comprehensive in terms of passive voice, AP Style, and basic grammar rules. They will also cover readings and videos that I don't go over in class.

Style Final: This will be a final chance to showcase your AP Style and grammar skills in a revision exercise. We will practice this same type of assignment throughout the semester.

Extra Credit Opportunity #1: Who wants a job after graduation? Networking is the most essential thing you can do to find work in May. LinkedIn is the best digital resource I know to improve your network. You will have a chance to earn a 1% bonus for the following.

- By Friday Sept. 1 at 11:59 p.m., please submit a screenshot with the number of LinkedIn connections you have now. If not, you lose any chance of getting extra credit. I need to see a number with your connections.
- By Friday, Dec. 1 at 11:59 p.m. submit a new screenshot showing your 50 new connections.
- If you get 50 or more new connections (that's 1 a day) you will get a 1% bonus. It's all or nothing.

Extra Credit Opportunity #2: Feedback is crucial in our industry. If more than 75% of the class completes the university's SEI evaluation, everyone will receive a 1% bonus for their final grade. I will announce in class when those SEI open and close.

Schedule: I have two kids who will get sick. Your patience and grace are welcome.

Week	In Class	Activity	Assignment
1-Aug-22	Tuesday	Syllabus Review	
1-Aug-28		Roberts Chapter 1 and 2	Writing Baseline Effort Assignment
		LinkedIn Video	
		Writing Baseline	
2-Aug-28	Tuesday	Writing Fundamentals Practice In Class	
		Writing Prompt In Class	
2		Status Update Video	Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
3 Sept. 4		Status Update Exercise	
3		Memo Writing Video	Status Update Practice Assignment
		Roberts Chapter 3	
4 Sept. 11	Tuesday	Student Memo Reviews	
4	Thursday	Working Class	Memo
5 Sept. 18		Internal Communication Video	
		News Video	
5		Associated Press Style Overview Video	Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
		Roberts Chapters 4 and 5	
6 Sept. 25	Tuesday	Content Writing Overview	
6		Content Writing Video	Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
		Roberts Chapter 6	
7-Oct-02	Tuesday	Student Content Review In Class	Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
7	Thursday	MIDTERM IN CLASS	

8-Oct-09	TUESDAY	WORKING CLASS FOR OBJECTIVE CONTENT ASSIGNMENT	Objective Content Assignment
8	FALL BREAK		
9-Oct-16	TUESDAY	PR Writing Overview in Class	
9		Strategic Communication Video	Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
10-Oct-23			
10			Writing Prompt Effort Assignment
11-Oct-30	TUESDAY		
11			
12-Nov-06	TUESDAY		
12			
13-Nov-13	TUESDAY		
13			
14-Nov-20		Enjoy the holiday	
14		Enjoy the holiday	
15-Nov-27	Tuesday		Style Final
			Student Review Effort Assignment
16-Dec-04	Tuesday	In Person Exam	
	Thursday	Optional Working Class For Blog During Reading Day	
Finals		We don't meet in person. The Style Final and Final Blog are due Dec 11 at 11:45 a.m.	There is no late grace because it is a final. If it's 1 minute late, it's an automatic F.

