

EN4519: PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING IN ENGLISH

Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Public Relations Writing in English

Subject Code

EN - English

Course Number

4519

Academic Unit

English (EN)

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

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course aims to:

- convey the fundamentals of public relations principles and practice to provide a working framework within which to execute public relations writing genres.
- introduce students to the working lifecycle of a public relations campaign from planning to execution and evaluation so that they can evaluate the best professional responses to public relations scenarios.
- enable students to apply public relations writing principles to practice across a selection of persuasive texts typically required in an everyday working context.
- provide examples of best practice in public relations writing and management as a way of benchmarking effective public relations work.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Students will identify what public relations writing is and what it does in a variety of organisational contexts		x	x	x
2	Students will apply public relations writing skills to produce a wide range of effective promotional copy for both controlled and uncontrolled forms of publicity for public relations purposes		x	x	x
3	Students will learn how to use a mix of media to reach the target audience		x	x	x
4	Students will evaluate various media channels, their relative strengths, and usefulness for media placements from the perspective of the public relations practitioner		x	x	x
5	Students will classify key stakeholders and their viewpoints as a way of measuring and managing public opinion to adjust writing styles				

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	Mini-lectures and applied learning individual activities	Students will attend mini-lectures and conduct activities which cover two major areas including exploring the foundations of public relations writing and writing news releases, bios, backgrounders, news and feature articles, crisis statements, op-eds, mission statements and writing various public relations messages.	1	throughout the semester
2	Problem based learning activities	evaluate classification models for identifying stakeholders and how to develop public relations messages to answer stakeholder needs across a range of public relations genres.	2	4 weeks
3	Critical analysis of public relations texts	Students will generate a wide range of public relations written genres and critique the purpose and effectiveness of these genre based examples culminating in an individual evaluation of a piece of public relations writing.	3	3 weeks
4	Writing workshops	Students will apply various writing techniques to suit the selected media channels used by public relations professionals to communicate effective messages to stakeholders such as writing for websites, social media, print and online newsletters, annual reports, broadcast media.	4	3 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Public Relations critique and re-write of PR example	1, 3, 4	40	Individual work; assessed individually
2	News Release writing test	1, 4	20	Individual work; assessed individually
3	Public Relations Case Study analysis and media kit writing	2, 3, 4	40	Group work, assessed as a group

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Public Relations Critique and re-write of PR example (40%)

Criterion

Content (20 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- The content is very well analysed and developed;
- All relevant information is included for analysis;
- The information is comprehensively analyzed and explained;
- The information and message are effectively conveyed;
- The purpose of the analysis and re-write are completely achieved.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- The content is competently selected and developed;
- The information included for analysis is sufficient;
- The information is sufficiently analyzed and explained;
- The information and message are clearly conveyed;
- The purpose of the analysis and re-write are achieved.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- The content selected for analysis is sufficient;
- Only part of the relevant data is included for analysis;
- Only part of the information is analyzed and explained;
- Only part of the information and message are clearly conveyed;
- The purpose of the analysis and re-write is partially achieved.

Marginal (D)

- The content selected for analysis is sketchy and inadequate;
- Only limited data is incorporated for analysis;
- The analysis is not informative and comprehensive;
- Only limited information and message is conveyed;
- The purpose of the analysis and re-write are not clearly stated.

Failure (F)

- The content selected for analysis is highly inadequate;

- Very limited or inaccurate data is incorporated for analysis;
 - The analysis is not at all comprehensible;
 - Very limited information and message is conveyed;
 - The purpose of the analysis and re-write are not achieved in any way.
-

Assessment Task

1. Public Relations Critique and re-write of PR example (40%)

Criterion

Language and style (20 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is highly accurate
- Use of vocabulary is very concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are highly appropriate.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is accurate
- Use of vocabulary is concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are appropriate

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is somewhat accurate
- Use of vocabulary is somewhat concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are somewhat appropriate.

Marginal (D)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is inaccurate; exhibit a great deal of residual and editorial problems.
- Use of vocabulary is limited and repetitive
- Style and tone are generally inappropriate.

Failure (F)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is very inaccurate; exhibit very serious of residual and editorial problems.
 - Use of vocabulary is not concise, varied, and incomprehensible;
 - Style and tone are totally inappropriate
-

Assessment Task

News Release writing test (20%)

Criterion

Content(10 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- The content is extremely well-presented using the inverted pyramid structure and is extremely well developed;
- The lead sentence and headline contain all of the relevant information according to the “W” formula
- All relevant information is very well covered including excellent attributions;
- The information and key PR messages are effectively conveyed;
- The purpose of writing the news release is completely achieved.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- The content is competently presented using the inverted pyramid structure and is very well developed;
- The lead sentence and headline contain most of the relevant information according to the “W” formula
- The information is sufficiently covered including good attributions;
- The information and PR messages are clearly conveyed and explained;
- The purpose of writing the news release is achieved.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- The content is adequately presented using the inverted pyramid structure and is adequately developed;
- The lead sentence and headline contain only partial information according to the “W” formula - - Only part of the information are clearly conveyed and includes sufficient attributions;
- The information and PR messages are clearly conveyed and explained;
- The purpose of writing the news release is partially achieved

Marginal (D)

- The content is sketchy and inadequately presented using the inverted pyramid structure and is inadequately developed and is not well developed;
- The lead sentence and headline contain inadequate information according to the “W” formula - Only limited data is included with poor attributions;
- The information and PR messages are poorly conveyed and explained.
- The purpose of writing the news release is not fully achieved.

Failure (F)

- The content is very sketchy and highly inadequate in presentation using the inverted pyramid structure and is very badly developed;
- The lead sentence and headline contain highly inadequate information according to the “W” formula Very limited or inaccurate data is incorporated with no attributions;
- Very limited information and PR messages are badly conveyed and explained;
- The purpose of writing the news release is not achieved in any way.

Assessment Task

News Release writing test (20%)

Criterion

Language and style(10 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is highly accurate
- Use of vocabulary is very concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are highly appropriate

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is accurate
- Use of vocabulary is concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are appropriate

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is somewhat accurate
- Use of vocabulary is somewhat concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are somewhat appropriate

Marginal (D)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is inaccurate; exhibit a great deal of residual and editorial problems.
- Use of vocabulary is limited and repetitive

- Style and tone are generally inappropriate

Failure (F)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is very inaccurate; exhibit very serious of residual and editorial problems.
 - Use of vocabulary is not concise, varied, and incomprehensible;
 - Style and tone are totally inappropriate
-

Assessment Task

Public Relations Case Study analysis and media kit writing (40%)

Criterion

Content(20 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- The issue is extremely well analysed and the PR written response is very well developed;
- All relevant information is included for analysis and in writing the PR response
- The case information is comprehensively analyzed and extremely well developed in writing the PR response;

Good (B+, B, B-)

- The issue is well analysed and the PR response is competently developed;
- The information included for analysis and in writing the PR response is sufficient;
- The case information is sufficiently analyzed and reasonably well developed in writing the PR response;
- The PR messages are well conveyed and clearly developed in writing the PR response

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- The issue is sufficiently analysed and the PR written response is also sufficient;
- Only part of the relevant information is included for analysis and in writing the PR response;
- Only part of the case information is analyzed and developed in writing the PR response

Marginal (D)

- The issue analysis and PR written response is sketchy and inadequate;
- Only limited information is incorporated for analysis and in writing the PR response;
- The case analysis and written PR response are not informative and comprehensive

Failure (F)

- The issue analysis and PR written response are highly inadequate;
 - Very limited or inaccurate information is incorporated for analysis and in writing the PR response;
 - The case analysis and written PR response are not at all comprehensible;
 - Very limited PR messages are conveyed and are very poorly developed in writing the PR response
-

Assessment Task

Public Relations Case Study analysis and media kit writing (40%)

Criterion

Language and style (20 marks)

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is highly accurate
- Use of vocabulary is very concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are highly appropriate.

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is accurate
- Use of vocabulary is concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are appropriate.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is somewhat accurate
- Use of vocabulary is somewhat concise, precise and varied;
- Style and tone are somewhat appropriate.

Marginal (D)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is inaccurate; exhibit a great deal of residual and editorial problems;
- Use of vocabulary is limited and repetitive;
- Style and tone are generally inappropriate

Failure (F)

- Language (sentence structure, grammar -- tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is very inaccurate; exhibit very serious of residual and editorial problems;
- Use of vocabulary is not concise, varied, and incomprehensible;
- Style and tone are totally inappropriate

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Public relations writing; target audience analysis; public opinion formation; corporate communications; news conferences; writing press releases; backgrounders; stakeholders; feature articles; bios; pitch letters; media kits; crisis communications; mission statements; speeches; scriptwriting; presentations; issue relations; corporate citizenship; media relations.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Public Relations Writing - Form and Style by Doug Newsom and Jim Haynes, 2001, 6th edition, Wadsworth: Belmont, California. HM263 .N493 2001

Additional Readings

Title	
1	The Business of Public Relations, E. W. Brody (1987) New York: Praeger, HD59 B757 1987.
2	The Essentials of PR, Sam Black (1993): London: Kogan Page, HD59 B53
3	The Dartnell PR Handbook, Robert L. Dilenschneider, Dan J. Forrester, (1987) Chicago: Dartnell Corp. HD 59 D28 1987.
4	Enhancing your PR, Beth DePoint, (1989) HD59 D27 1989.
5	PR as Communications Management, R.E Crable and Steven L. Vibbert, (1986) New York: Bellwether Press, HD59.C73 1986.
6	PR Techniques, F. Jefkins, (1994) 2nd Edition, London: Butterworth, HD59 J433 1994.
7	Effective PR Management, Paul Winner, (1993) 2nd Edition, London: Kogan Page.
8	Creating corporate reputations: identity, image and performance (2001) G. Dowling. Oxford: OUP HD59.2 D695.2001.
9	E-PR: the essential guide to public relations on the Internet, Matt Haig, (2000) London, Dover NH: Kogan Page. HD59.H23 2000.

10	Effective PR, Scott M. Cutlipp, Allen H. Center, Glen M. Broom 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, HM1221.C88 2000.
11	Guerilla PR wired: waging a successful publicity campaign online, offline and everywhere in between, Michael Levine, Chicago: McGraw Hill (2002) HD59.L483 2002.
12	Handbook of Public Relations Robert L.Heath (ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications (2001) HD59. H297 2001.
13	Mediawriting: print, broadcast and public relations, W. Richard Whitaker, Janet E. Ramsey, Ronald D. Smith, New York: Longman, (2000) P96.A86 W48 2000.
14	Writing and Reporting News, Carole Rich (1997) 2nd ed. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, PN4781.R42 1997.
15	Reaching audiences: a guide to media writing, Katherine McAdams (1996), Boston: Allyn & Bacon, P96.A86 M38 1996.
16	Public Relations Writing - Form and Style by Doug Newsom and Jim Hayes, 2014, 10th edition, Wadsworth: Belmont California. HM1221 .N478 2014b