

REVISED SCHEDULE – 3/23
COM 447/363: Promotional Production
Cleveland State University, School of Communication
Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Beth Thomas

Office: MU 210

Email: e.a.thomas88@csuohio.edu (*best way to reach me, as I check every day and often)

Zoom: Personal Meeting ID: 599-915-4185; <https://zoom.us/j/5999154185>

*You can create your free Zoom account through CSU: <https://csuohio.zoom.us>

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. I will be available on Zoom during this time.

Class meeting days & time: Online until further notice

Class Location: Online using Blackboard Learn

Twitter: @ea5335 - Follow me for information about internships, jobs and current public relations news. Do not use Twitter to communicate with me about class questions.

Course Description & Purpose

This is a capstone course in advanced public relations skills. It will emphasize message design and dissemination techniques that range across print and digital media for communication. Students will work with a real-world client to create a developed strategic communication plan with deliverables. Additionally, students will study advanced public relations topics, including crisis communication, the PESO model and the future of public relations.

Course objectives are:

- to network with industry professionals.
- to learn how to write an effective resume
- to present yourself to an area employer and talk about your strengths and answer challenging, behavior-based questions.
- to learn about the different areas of promotional communication and the possible jobs available to entry-level professionals.
- to learn about the power of storytelling and its role in public relations.
- to enhance writing skills and demonstrate mastery of spelling, grammar and sentence construction.
- to learn how to effectively handle communications during a company crisis.
- to create a branding event that includes a website, social media account, logo and color theme and fonts.
- to conduct research for our client to determine target audiences.
- to write a blog post for client.
- to produce a promotional video.
- to demonstrate the application of previously acquired skills and knowledge in public relations and advertising through a client-focused project.
- to present a strategic communication plan to a real-world client.
- to learn about the future of communications through AR, VR and other technologies.
- to produce a personal online e-portfolio featuring written, visual and video content that can be presented to employers.

Course Format & Attendance

Class format will be a combination of lecture and hands-on, in-class activities.

The syllabus, course materials (including PowerPoints), assignments and other supplemental resources will be posted on Blackboard. Please thoroughly review the course schedule and any updates. Make sure your computer is appropriately set up to watch videos, access lecture PowerPoints and other course materials. I strive to minimize printing paper and therefore all assignments should be submitted to me through Blackboard for grading. You are responsible for regularly tracking your course points via Blackboard. If you have any concerns about your points or if you are having trouble accessing your points, please meet with me during office hours or by appointment. Do NOT wait until the last week of the semester to check your points and discuss your performance.

Attendance is required for you to succeed in this course. Attendance is recorded in each session and counts toward your final grade. We will be working on various in-class assignments and if you miss a graded in-class assignment it CANNOT be made up. **After THREE (unexcused) missed class days, you will lose 10 points for each missed class day from the attendance/participation category.** You cannot participate in discussions and work on assignments in the lab if you don't attend class. An example of an excused absence would be a serious or contagious illness with a doctor's excuse or a death in the family.

Professionalism & Expectations

Students are expected to practice professionalism throughout the course. Professionalism is perceived in different ways, but it begins with respect for yourself and others and includes:

- Coming to class prepared. Read the assignment and be ready to actively apply key concepts and engage in class discussions. Your enthusiasm, participation in discussions, suggestions and feedback are essential in making this a successful class.
- Following the class schedule provided in the syllabus.
- Not using your cell phone in class. If an emergency comes up or you are checking your phone for something urgent, please tell me in advance or afterward.
- Taking responsibility for your own learning outcomes. If you have questions or want more information about a particular concept, take the initiative to talk with me. My office hours are posted above.
- Completing and submitting your work on time. Submit your best work, not your first draft.
- Checking your CSU email account. Besides being the best and fastest way to reach me, I will email you if emergencies or changes arise during the semester.

Course Rules & Policies

Late/Absent Assignment & Missed Exams

You are expected to take tests and submit assignments on or before the scheduled date in Blackboard. If you miss a test or deadline for a legitimate reason (e.g. serious illness or injury, death in family), you are expected to notify me of your situation prior to missing a scheduled test or assignment. Computer failures, transportation issues are not legitimate excuses for missing a deadline. If for some legitimate reason you are not able to contact me prior to missing a deadline, you should contact me within one day of missing the deadline. You must provide written confirmation of your excuse on an appropriate paper (e.g. doctor's excuse on office letterhead), which should provide the contact information of the person who can verify the written excuse.

Assignments turned in after the designated due date will be docked 5% of the grade for each day late, including weekends. An assignment will not be accepted more than five days after the due date.

Assignments received later than this or never submitted will be given a zero.

Format for Submitting Written Work

All written work must be typewritten in Times New Roman or Calibri and free of spelling and grammatical errors. *Please refer to the AP Stylebook when writing your assignments for this course.* You will submit your assignments via Blackboard.

Academic Misconduct

Please read the CSU policies on academic misconduct published in the CSU Student Handbook. Ignorance of the policies is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct. Possible penalties can include failure in this course, revocation of funding and/or even expulsions from the university. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of course rules as specified in this syllabus.
- Providing and using unauthorized assistance on individual assignments.
- Providing or receiving information during exams, i.e. cheating
- Plagiarism, including the use of information from any sources that are not credited.
- Failing to report incidents of academic misconduct.

Intellectual Property Protection

Lectures given in this course are property of the instructors and Cleveland State University. Class lectures may not be recorded in any form without prior permission from the instructors and any guest lecturers that may speak to this class. Recordings, including class notes, may not be used for commercial purposes.

Accommodations

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to ensure educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services at 216-687-2015. The office is located in MC 147. Accommodations need to be requested in advance and will not be granted retroactively.

Liberal Arts Edge

This course fulfills the following skills under the CSU General Education requirements:

- written communication skills,
- ability to work in a team,
- analytical/quantitative reasoning skills,
- verbal communication skills,
- computer skills,
- organizational abilities, and
- creativity.

For a more detailed explanation of the transferable skills associated with these categories, please go to <http://www.csuohio.edu/class/classedge/transferrable-skills>. Knowing about transferable skills is useful in writing a resume and in articulating the abilities you have acquired to a prospective employer. Also see "Acquired Skills for Use in Resume" <http://www.csuohio.edu/class/students/acquired-skills-for-use-in-resume> that helps you put your skills into words, and "Skills by Major" <http://www.csuohio.edu/class/students/skills-major> to see examples of how you can talk about your abilities in a paragraph.

Tentative Nature of this Syllabus

The syllabus represents a contract for this course. In some circumstances, events that occur over the semester may require me to modify the course and thereby the syllabus. For example, policies, deadlines, topics to be covered, etc. In the event I need to do so, I will announce the modifications in class or by email. Students are responsible for any changes to the syllabus.

Grading

You will be graded on the basis of your performance on your assignments, exams and your class participation. The weighting of these evaluation criteria will be:

Assignments/Quizzes	Points	Tentative Due Date
Resume RX event	25	Jan. 31
Practitioner profile pitch	25	Feb. 2
Mock Interview Day event	25	Feb. 21
Practitioner profile	100	Feb. 23
Event branding project & presentation	200	March 4
Mock crisis communication interview	50	March 30, April 1
Lecture quizzes (3)	25 pts. each (75 pts.)	Ongoing
Promotional video-CANCELLED		
Campaign project & presentation	300	April 29, May 1
E-portfolio	100	Finals Week
Participation	100	Ongoing

Resume RX (Career Services event)

After listening to a Career Services staff member talk about resume writing, you will update your resume and attend the Resume RX event on Friday, Jan. 31 at Rhodes West 280, from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. It is a walk-in event with no advance registration required. We will not have a class meeting that day. For more info: <https://www.csuohio.edu/career-services/our-calendar-and-events>

Practitioner pitch and profile

For this assignment you will draft a profile piece on your chosen mentor. You are tasked with writing an engaging profile article that shares the personal insights and professional successes of your assignment mentor. You may write this profile in third or first person. Upon approval by your mentor, this profile may be posted to your e-portfolio. A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment.

Mock Interview Day (Career Services event)

After listening to a Career Services staff member talk about how to interview, you will prepare to attend the Mock Interview Day event on Friday, Feb. 21 at Rhodes West 280, from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. You will

receive a real-life interview experience with an area employer. **Advanced registration is required to secure a time slot.** For more info and to register: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c49a5a92fa3f94-february1>

Event branding project & presentation

Students will work in groups to help plan an event for our client, Chris Inman with Classic Strategic Media located in Independence, Ohio - <https://classicstrategicmedia.com/>. One group will be picked as the winner and their deliverables will be used for the event. A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment. To prepare for the April 2020 event, the following tasks must be completed and presented to the client.

- A website with registration link to the event
- A Twitter account and FaceBook event with a 30-day plan of posts and hashtag creations
- Graphic elements, including an event logo, color scheme and fonts.

Mock crisis communication interview

Students will participate in a mock interview as a communication spokesperson for a company that has received some negative news. The scenario will be sent to students 24 hours in advance and he/she will individually prepare talking points before doing the interview on camera. Afterward, we will constructively critique how the interview was handled and determine if he/she used guidelines and principles from the lecture and applied them to this situation. A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment.

Lecture quizzes

Quizzes will be completed individually through BlackBoard and will be timed. All of the quiz questions will be based off of the information from the in-class lectures. Before each quiz, a study guide will be provided to you.

Promotional video - CANCELLED

For this assignment, using iMovie, Windows Movie Maker or other video editing software, you and your group members will create a 60-second (or less) video (content TBD). A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment.

Strategic communication plan and presentation

For your final project, you're tasked with drafting a strategic communication plan addressing the needs for our client. In addition to the plan, you will carry out your tactics and provide examples to the client during your presentation. A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment. The following tasks must be presented to the client and written in the plan:

- Research small to medium marketing firms (target audience) that could benefit from our client's services
- Suggest podcasting topics and people that our client can reach to interview. What do communication professionals want to listen to and what people do they want to hear from? Who should our client target?
- Create ebooks, which is an educational piece (pdf). Eight to 10 ideas will be provided to class.
- Create a blog post (1000-1200 words) Eight to 10 ideas will be provided to the class.

E-portfolio

You will create a professional e-portfolio in WordPress or other website editing/hosting site that will be a collection of the work that you have done as a student and as an emerging professional. Include the work you are most proud of and you believe showcases your experience and expertise in the field of promotional communication. A rubric will be provided to you for this assignment.

Participation

After THREE (unexcused) missed class days, you will lose 10 points for each missed class day from the attendance/participation category. You cannot participate in discussions and work on assignments in the lab if you don't attend class.

Grading Scale

All grades will be posted on Blackboard and the final course grade will be determined using the standard scale below:

Grade	Grading scale	Grade	Grading scale
A	93% - 100% (1017 - 1100 pts.)	C+	77% - 79% (845 - 873 pts.)
A-	90% - 92% (984 - 1016 pts.)	C	70% - 76% (764 - 844 pts.)
B+	87% - 89% (951 - 983 pts.)	D	60% - 69% (658 - 765 pts.)
B	83% - 86% (911 - 950 pts.)	F	0% - 59% (0 - 657 pts.)
B-	80% - 82% (874 - 910 pts.)		

Course Schedule

The following is a tentative list of topics and assignments. You should have readings and/or assignments prepared for the week on which it appears on the schedule. Revisions in this schedule will be made as necessary.

Dates	Class Topics	Outside of Class
Week 1, Jan. 13, 15, 17	Syllabus & course introduction Meet client: Chris Inman, Classic Strategic Media - https://classicstrategicmedia.com (Jan. 15) Grammar & AP Style PRSA Practitioner profiles Pick groups	Review client's company
Week 2, Jan. 22, 24 *No class on Monday, Jan. 20 for MLK Day	Guest Speaker - Career Services: Resumes and cover letters (Jan. 22) Diversity in the industry	Update resume for Jan. 31 resume review
Week 3, Jan. 27, 29, 31	Storytelling Resume RX - (Jan. 31) Rhodes West 280, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Walk-in, no	Practitioner profile pitch due

* No class meeting on Friday, Jan. 31 but you must attend Resume RX	registration. Info: https://www.csuohio.edu/career-services/our-calendar-and-events	
Week 4, Feb. 3, 5, 7	PESO Model Guest Speaker: Career Services - The Art of Interviewing (Feb. 5) Workshop day w/ group	
Week 5, Feb. 10, 12, 14	Engaging social media posts Guest speaker: Librarian Ben Richards, Copyright and social media (Feb. 12) Who tells your story?	Quiz #1 in Blackboard due
Week 6, Feb. 19, 21 * No class on Monday, Feb. 17 for President's Day * No class meeting on Friday, Feb. 21 but you must attend mock interview day	Guest speaker: Career Services - Online networking through LinkedIn (Feb. 19) Signup for a spot on mock interview day (Career Services) (Feb. 21) Rhodes West 280, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c49a5a92fa3f94-february1	Practitioner profiles due Prepare for mock interview
Week 7, Feb. 24, 26, 28	Media relations Customers control the brand Workshop day w/ group	
Week 8, March 2, 4, 6	Guest speaker: Jen Etling, Crisis communication training (March 2) Group presentations of event branding to Chris Inman (March 4) Workshop day w/ group	Group presentations of event branding
SPRING BREAK: March 9-22, 2020 *No Week #9, as this was the 2nd week of Spring Break		
Week 10, March 23, 25, 27	Meet in Zoom M,W from 9:10-10 a.m.- See how to access Zoom in the contact info section.	Prepare crisis communication talking points

	Media relations Customers control the brand	
Week 11, March 30, April 1, 3	Mock crisis communication interview via Zoom – Signup times will be available. No synchronous class times to meet this week.	Quiz #2 in Blackboard due
Week 12, April 6, 8, 10	Meet in Zoom M,W from 9:10-10 a.m.- See how to access Zoom in the contact info section. Critique mock interviews Content marketing Strategic communication	
Week 13, April 13, 15, 17	Work on strategic communication plans	Quiz #3 in Blackboard due
Week 14, April 20, 22, 24	Guest speaker: Chris Rennison, CSU library, AR, VR, and location-based campaigns (April 15, 17) - TENTATIVE Work on strategic communication plans E-portfolios	Read “6 ways VR can transform PR” and “What you should know about location-based services”
Week 15, April 27, 29, May 1	Work on strategic communication plans Communication plan presentations to client (April 29, May 1) – TENTATIVE F2F, or via Zoom	Strategic communication plan due
Finals Week, May 4-8	Work on E-portfolio	E-portfolio due

**Last updated 3/17/20*