

COURSE SYLLABUS

CMGT 599: WRITING FOR STRATEGIC CORPORATE COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

Spring 2008

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.- 9:20 p.m., ASC

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Office Hours: By appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In an increasingly digitized world, the need for solid communication skills has never been greater. The ability to write fluently, to engage disparate audiences with your message, and to present your thoughts in a highly professional and compelling manner are invaluable skills within any corporate structure. In a recent article published by The Conference Board, a senior VP for global recruitment firm Korn/Ferry International remarked: "There's a growing misconception that the proliferation of multimedia technology has diminished the need for strong writing skills, and this is just plain false. At the core of all communications is content. We take a very critical eye toward a candidate's ability to write, whether it's in their resume, their cover letter, or the various samples of work product that reflect the quality of their skills."

This course provides a review of the fundamental skills that constitute excellent writing, as well as hands-on development of a portfolio of written work that can be utilized within any corporate communication environment. The course provides a framework for the development of solidly written pieces via lectures about the craft of writing, analysis of writing samples, and continuous practice in writing and revision.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To understand basic grammatical principles and review fundamentals of good writing.
- To develop a unique professional writing style.
- To understand and engage in the process of writing.
- To develop a diverse portfolio of written marketing and communication samples for students to utilize in real-world communication settings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Six written assignments with attendant revisions, all of which will be included in the student's final portfolio.
- Minimum of three in-class writing assignments.
- Group project and in-class presentation on a specific corporate communication scenario.
- In-class discussion of required readings. It is assumed that you have done the assigned readings prior to class.
- Class participation in group activities is expected and will be a part of your grade. As such, attendance is very important.
- Students absent more than once must discuss this in-person with the instructor.

GRADING

Class Participation	15%
Writing Assignments	60%
Group Project:	25%

REQUIRED TEXTS

Garrand, T. (2006). Writing for Multimedia and the Web. Focal Press/Elsevier, Burlington, MA.

Lamott, A. (1995). Bird by Bird. Anchor Books/Random House, New York, NY.

Strumpf, M. & Douglas, A. (2004). The Grammar Bible. Owl Books/Henry Holt, New York, NY.

USC Bookstore: Course Reader Comm 599

Academic Integrity Policy.

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication degree program. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member.

Resources on academic honesty can be found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS>.) "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations, and citation in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's writing program; "Understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration. The "2006-

2007 SCampus" (<http://www.usc.edu/scampus>) contains the university's student conduct code and other student-related policies.

Disabilities Policy. Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan. 15 **Overview of Organizational Writing**

Jan. 22 **Writing Workshop I**

Readings:

Strumpf & Douglas, Chapter 15; also pages 228-236.

Course Reader: Gayeski, What is Corporate Communication?

Jan. 29 **Writing Workshop II**

Readings:

Lamott, Introduction-page 27; 80-84; 103-109; 176-182; 185-194.

Feb. 5 **Writing Workshop III/Writing Analysis**

Feb. 12 **Publication Writing**

Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 1 (Article). Due Feb. 26.

Feb. 19 **Corporate Reports/White Papers: Component Analysis**
Readings:
Course Reader: Vahouny, Investor Relations and Financial Communication.
Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 2 (CEO Message). Due Feb. 26.
Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 3 (White Paper). Due Mar. 11.

Feb. 26 **Media Relations**
Readings:
Course Reader: Heath, Strategic Issues Management.
Course Reader: Carden, Working with Innovators and Laggards.
Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 4 (Press Release). Due Mar. 4.

Mar. 4 **Writing for Branding and Marketing Communication**
Readings:
Course Reader: Lenderman, Chapter 7.
Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 5 (Brand review).
Due Mar. 11.

Mar. 11 **Communicating Negative News**
Readings:
Course Reader: Benoit & Pang, Crisis Communication and Image Repair Discourse.
Course Reader: Coombs, The Development of the Situational Crisis Communication Theory.
Course Reader: Gray, Communicating Major Change within the Organization.

Mar. 18 **Spring Break**

Mar. 25 **Writing Analysis/Editing**
Writing Assignment/Portfolio Sample 6 (Oral Presentation/Handouts).
Due Apr. 8.

Apr. 1 **Group Project Work.**

- Apr. 8 **Oral Presentation: Writing for an Audience**
Readings:
Course Reader: Safire, Preface.
In-class presentations/critiques of Portfolio Sample 6.
- Apr. 15 **Writing for New Media**
Readings:
Garrand, Chapters 2, 10 and 11.
- Apr. 22 **Group Project Class Presentations**
Final portfolios due.
- Apr. 29 **Group Project Class Presentations**