

Loyola University Chicago
COMM 318/Writing for Public Relations
Spring Semester 2024 Course Syllabus

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The Course

You will be able to write clearly, succinctly, and persuasively in a variety of modern formats which are designed to model real-world application. You will also hear from professionals in the field and learn how to wield emerging tools (such as AI), to help make you a better writer. In the end, you'll have a plethora of portfolio-ready items to take with you into your career.

This course is designed to teach strategy and tactics behind each form of communication. You should feel equipped to understand and use new media channels that emerge during your career. Reading is just as important as writing, so we will go through several (easy to read) books that should stick with you into your professional career.

Books You Need

- *The Associated Press Stylebook: 2022-2024*, by The Associated Press
- *Everybody Writes: Your New and Improved Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content, 2nd Edition*, by Ann Handley
- *Using Behavioral Science in Marketing: Drive Customer Action and Loyalty by Prompting Instinctive Responses*, by Nancy Harhut
- *Smart Brevity: The Power of Saying More with Less*, by Jim VandeHei, Mike Allen, Roy Schwartz
- *Brief: Make a Bigger Impact by Saying Less*, by Joseph McCormack

What You Will Leave With

- An understanding of the strategic and tactical elements that come with content development
- Honed writing skills
- Awareness of the world around you through regular discussion on the behind-the-scenes communication
- A robust, modern portfolio of work from the assignments in this class to be used in the next step of your career

What Is Expected of You

Show up on time and act professionally; candor and professionalism *can* go hand in hand. Attendance will be taken at each class, and cameras are expected to be on at all times. If possible, let me know ahead of time if you'll be absent. If that's not possible, I will always work with you.

Whether your absence was an emergency or not, you are expected get any notes or assignments from the other students as soon as possible. Due dates will *not* be extended because of a missed class. Late work will be deducted by one full letter grade per day after the deadline.

Please note, you are allowed two unexcused absences in the course. This will affect your Participation grade slightly, but is allowed. Any unexcused absences over two will begin to affect your final grade by 5% per each missed class. Please note that missing class is not advised, as you will be receiving feedback on your DRAFT assignments that will help you improve your FINAL submission. Missing class will likely create a snowball effect on your FINAL grades.

Do These to Succeed

1. Show up
2. Check, then double check
3. Be human

Content Theft + Letting Robots Take Over

Being yourself will not only be your key to success here but in your future career. Though we will discuss AI being a viable support tool, the technology is **NOT** to be depended on fully for assignments. Overreliance on tools like ChatGPT can make good content terrible. Anyone caught plagiarizing will receive an F for the assignment, and this includes submitting the same assignment for multiple classes. This is unethical and considered cheating.

If you have utilized AI in the improvement of one of your assignments, please submit the version prior to the AI changes along with the finished version. The finished version must highlight where the AI made the changes and why you thought it was pertinent to accept them. Failure to disclose will result in a grading penalty.

Assignments and Grading

You have made it to a 300-level Writing Intensive class, so you've been given enough exams. Participation, meeting deadlines, the evolution, and quality of work will be how you are evaluated. This is how it works in the real world.

You are expected to know the material we cover in lectures. Incorporate the learnings into your assignments. For nearly all assignments, you will submit a draft and then make revisions after getting feedback. Then you will submit a final product. Only the final product will be graded, but drafts must be turned in on time to receive all of the allocated points.

All assignments are due no later than midnight on the date listed.

Grading Scale

100-94: A	93-90: A-	89-87: B+	86-84: B	83-80: B-	79-77: C+	76-74: C	73-70: C-	69-67: D+	66-60: D	59-0: F
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Draft Submissions: 32.5% Of Grade – 325 Possible Points (all points awarded for on-time submission)

Week	Draft	Points	Due
1	Professional Email	10	1/18
2	Press Release, Email Pitch, Fact Sheet, Media Advisory	40	1/25
3	Blog Post and Email Newsletter	30	2/1
4	Social Media Campaign and Infographic	30	2/8
5	Video or Podcast Script	20	2/15
6	Content Calendar and Automation	20	2/22
7	Keynote Presentation and Notes	20	2/29
8	SPRING BREAK	-	-
9	Proposal	20	3/14
10	Interview or Profile	20	3/21
11	Media Kit	20	3/28
12	Resume and LinkedIn Profile	20	4/4
13	Cover Letter	20	4/11
14	Portfolio Initial	35	4/18
15	Portfolio Second	20	4/23

Final Submissions: 50% Of Grade—500 Possible Points

Week	Final Submission	Points	Due
2	Professional Email	10	1/23
3	Press Release, Email Pitch, Fact Sheet, Media Advisory	40	1/30
4	Blog Post and Email Newsletter	40	2/6
5	Social Media Campaign and Infographic	40	2/13
6	Video or Podcast Script	40	2/20
7	Content Calendar and Automation	40	2/27
8	SPRING BREAK	-	-
9	Keynote Presentation and Notes	40	3/12
10	Proposal	40	3/19
11	Interview or Profile	40	3/26
12	Media Kit	40	4/2
13	Resume and LinkedIn Profile	40	4/9
14	Cover Letter	20	4/16
15	Portfolio	70	4/25

Class Participation: 17.5% Of Grade – 175 Possible Points

Week	Item	Points	Due
1-15	Class Attendance	70	-
1	News Story #1	2.5	1/18
1	Press Release Example	2.5	1/23
2	News Story #2	2.5	1/25
2	Blog Post or Email Newsletter Example	2.5	1/30
3	News Story #3	2.5	2/1
3	Social Media Campaign or Infographic Example	2.5	2/6
4	News Story #4	2.5	2/8
4	Video or Podcast Example	2.5	2/13
5	News Story #5	2.5	2/15
5	Content Calendar or Automation Example	2.5	2/20
6	News Story #6	2.5	2/22
6	Keynote Presentation Example	2.5	2/27
7	News Story #7	2.5	2/29
7	Proposal Example	2.5	3/12
8	SPRING BREAK	-	-
9	News Story #8	2.5	3/12
9	Interview or Profile Example	2.5	3/19
10	News Story #9	2.5	3/21
10	Media Kit Example	2.5	3/26
11	News Story #10	2.5	3/28
11	Resume or LinkedIn Profile Example	2.5	4/2
12	News Story #11	2.5	4/4
12	Cover Letter Example	2.5	4/9
13	News Story #12	2.5	4/11
13	Portfolio Example	2.5	4/16
14	News Story #13	2.5	4/18
15	News Story #14	2.5	4/23
16	Final Attendance and Portfolio Presentation	40	5/4

Class Schedule

Week	Date	In Class	After Class
1	1/16	INTROS DISCUSS expectations and goals LEARN about professional emails ASSIGNMENT professional email draft	DRAFT professional email READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 15-91 FIND news story to discuss
1	1/18	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 15-91 LEARN about press releases, pitches, fact sheets, and media advisories FEEDBACK on professional email drafts	SUBMIT final professional email READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 92-127 FIND a press release
2	1/23	DISCUSS press releases RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 92-127 LEARN about websites, blogs, apps, and email newsletters ASSIGNMENT press release, email pitch, fact sheet, and media advisory	DRAFT press release, email pitch, fact sheet, and media advisory READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> pages 128-172 FIND a news story to discuss

Week	Date	In Class	After Class
2	1/25	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 128-172 LEARN about websites, apps, blogs, and emails FEEDBACK on press release, email pitch, fact sheet, and media advisory	SUBMIT final press release, email pitch, fact sheet, and media advisory READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> pages 173-220 FIND a blog or email newsletter
3	1/30	DISCUSS blogs and email newsletters RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> pages 173-220 LEARN about social media campaigns and infographics ASSIGNMENT blog post and email newsletter	DRAFT blog post and email newsletter READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 222-276 FIND a news story to discuss
3	2/1	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 222-276 LEARN about social media campaigns and infographics FEEDBACK blog post and email newsletter	SUBMIT final blog post and email newsletter READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 277-337 FIND a social media campaign or infographic
4	2/6	DISCUSS social media campaigns and infographics RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 277-337 LEARN about videos and podcasts ASSIGNMENT social media campaign and infographic	DRAFT social media campaign and infographic READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 338-376 FIND a news story to discuss
4	2/8	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 338-376 LEARN about videos and podcasts FEEDBACK social media campaign and infographic	SUBMIT final social media campaign and infographic READ <i>Everybody Writes</i> 377-391 FIND a video or podcast
5	2/13	DISCUSS videos and podcasts RECAP <i>Everybody Writes</i> 377-391 LEARN about content planning and automations ASSIGNMENT video or podcast script	DRAFT video or podcast script READ <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 1-59 FIND a news story to discuss
5	2/15	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 1-59 LEARN about content planning and automations FEEDBACK video or podcast scripts	SUBMIT final video or podcast script READ <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 60-119 FIND content plan or automation
6	2/20	DISCUSS content plans or automations RECAP <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 60-119 LEARN about keynote presentations ASSIGNMENT content calendar and automation	DRAFT a content calendar and automation READ <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 120-195 FIND a news story to discuss
6	2/22	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 120-195 GUEST SPEAKER FEEDBACK content calendar and automation	SUBMIT final content calendar and automation READ <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 196-264 FIND a keynote presentation
7	2/27	DISCUSS RECAP <i>Using Behavioral Science</i> 196-264 LEARN about proposals ASSIGNMENT keynote presentation and notes	DRAFT keynote presentation and notes READ <i>Smart Brevity</i> Part 1 FIND a news story to discuss
7	2/29	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Smart Brevity</i> Part 1 LEARN about proposals FEEDBACK on keynote presentations and notes	SUBMIT final keynote presentation and notes READ <i>Smart Brevity</i> Parts 2 & 3 FIND a news story and proposal example
8	SB	-	-
9	3/12	DISCUSS news stories and proposals RECAP <i>Smart Brevity</i> Parts 2 & 3 LEARN about interviews and profiles ASSIGNMENT proposal	DRAFT proposal READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 1-4 FIND a news story to discuss
Week	Date	In Class	After Class
9	3/14	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 1-4	SUBMIT final proposal READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 5-7 FIND an interview or profile

		LEARN about interviews and profiles FEEDBACK on proposals	
10	3/19	DISCUSS interview or profile RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 5-7 LEARN about media kits ASSIGNMENT interview or profile	DRAFT interview or profile READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 8-10 FIND a news story to discuss
10	3/21	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 8-10 GUEST SPEAKER FEEDBACK on interviews or profiles	SUBMIT final interview or profile READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 11-13 FIND a media kit
11	3/26	DISCUSS media kits RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 11-13 LEARN about resumes and LinkedIn profiles ASSIGNMENT	DRAFT media kit READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 14-17 FIND a news story to discuss
11	3/28	DISCUSS news stories RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 14-17 LEARN about resumes and LinkedIn profiles FEEDBACK	SUBMIT final media kit READ <i>Brief</i> Chapters 18-20 FIND resume or LinkedIn profile
12	4/2	DISCUSS resumes and LinkedIn profiles RECAP <i>Brief</i> Chapters 18-20 LEARN about cover letters ASSIGNMENT resume and LinkedIn profile	DRAFT resume and LinkedIn profile FIND a news story to discuss
12	4/4	DISCUSS news stories LEARN about cover letters FEEDBACK resumes and LinkedIn profiles	SUBMIT final resume and LinkedIn profile FIND a cover letter
13	4/9	DISCUSS cover letters LEARN about portfolios/personal branding ASSIGNMENT cover letter	DRAFT cover letter FIND a news story to discuss
13	4/11	DISCUSS news stories GUEST SPEAKER FEEDBACK cover letters	SUBMIT final cover letter FIND a portfolio
14	4/16	DISCUSS news stories LEARN about emerging media ASSIGNMENT portfolio	DRAFT portfolio FIND news stories
14	4/18	DISCUSS news stories LEARN about interviews FEEDBACK portfolio	REVISE portfolio FIND news stories
15	4/23	DISCUSS news stories LEARN about workflows FEEDBACK portfolio	REVISE portfolio
15	4/25	OPEN DISCUSSION FEEDBACK portfolios	SUBMIT final portfolio PREPARE for final portfolio presentation
16	5/4	FINAL PORTFOLIO PRESENTATIONS	FINAL PORTFOLIO PRESENTATIONS

Title IX Notice of Reporting Obligations for Responsible Campus Partners

As an instructor, I am considered a Responsible Campus Partner (“RCP”) under Loyola’s **Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation** (located at www.luc.edu/equity). While my goal is for you to be able to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, I want to be transparent that as a RCP I am required to report certain disclosures of sexual misconduct (such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner and/or domestic violence, and/or stalking) to the University’s **Title IX** Coordinator.

As an instructor, I also have a mandatory obligation under Illinois law to report disclosures of or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect (<https://www.luc.edu/hr/legal-notice/mandated-reporting-of-child-abuse-and-neglect/>).

The purpose of these reporting requirements is for the University to inform students who have experienced sexual/gender- based violence of available resources and support. Such a report **will not generate a report to law enforcement** (no student will ever be forced to file a report with the police). Furthermore, the University’s resources and supports are available to all students even if a student chooses that they do not want any other action taken. Please note that in certain situations, based on the nature of the disclosure, the University may need to take additional action to ensure the safety of the University community. If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact the **Office for Equity & Compliance** at equity@luc.edu or 773-508-7766.

If you wish to speak with a confidential resource regarding gender-based violence, I encourage you to call **The Line** at 773-494-3810. The Line is staffed by confidential advocates from 8:30am-5pm M-F and 24 hours on the weekend when school is in session. Advocates can provide support, talk through your options (medical, legal, LUC reporting, safety planning, etc.), and connect you with additional resources as needed. More information can be found at luc.edu/coalition or luc.edu/wellness.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty. Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student’s work, using AI, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy.
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student’s work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.
- Using ChatGPT or AI to **complete** your writing assignments.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one’s own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one’s own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one’s own another person’s unpublished work or examination material;

- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.
- Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of their findings and sanction.

The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

Students with Special Accommodations:

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Special Accommodations confidentially to me. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Respect for Diversity Statement: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students.

I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomfort or hurt you may experience:

- Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences and want to work

with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.

- Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
- Notify me of the issue through another source such as your academic advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue.

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support: Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – just email me or schedule a meeting with me. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa; phone number 773-508-8840, email deanofstudents@luc.edu.