



PR 351A: Strategic Public Relations Media and Content
4 Units

Spring 2021 – Wednesdays – 3-6:20 p.m.

Section: 21151D

Location: Online

Instructor: Nan Sumski

Office Location: via Zoom

Office Hours: Per request by appointment

Contact Info: sumski@usc.edu

Course Description

This course is step two of a three-part public relations writing journey that starts with PR 209 and concludes with PR 351B. Building on the PR writing standards that students mastered in their PR 209 course, PR 351A will develop more strategic communications and varied storytelling with a greater degree of difficulty.

Today's public relations professional needs to understand and be competent in many forms of communication. The business world they work in is rapidly evolving with earned, owned and paid media converging. Media relations, social media content creation and influencer engagement, and paid media are now equally important for any organization's strategic communications. The role of the public relations practitioner has changed to reflect this shift and training needs to include intensive writing plus creating high-quality multimedia content for traditional, emerging and social media.

This class is an intensive, hands-on course designed to provide students with the skills necessary to engage with, and produce compelling content for, contemporary media channels of all types. Students will explore the arranging, handling and evaluating of public relations and media communications programs. The course will convey to students how the effective use of media communications can strengthen a public relations strategy and enhance the overall company/client success.

Students will work with relevant and real-life case histories and deal with contemporary topics using media in public relations.

What defines the media: Who are they? What do they do? How do they get their stories? What tools are needed in today's media environment? How do we best engage media in today's environment of media convergence?

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Recognize the variety and strategy in the work performed by those in the public relations field.
- Study and utilize various tactics for gaining media attention.
- Identify what is newsworthy and strategies to pitch reporters.
- Determine and write an effective press release.
- Learn and craft the appropriate written documents included in a press kit (and electronic press kit).
- Describe the role and importance of social media channels in media communications.
- Plan press junkets and prepare the talent for interviews.
- Determine appropriate strategic talking points.
- Value the role of reputation and brand management in public relations.

- Prepare for crisis communications scenarios by employing planning and response strategies.
- Learn to create a strategic and innovative public relations campaign.

Prerequisite Courses: PR 209 and PR 250

Course Notes

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

1. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting me your homework by the due date/time. No late assignments are accepted.
2. There will be no make-ups for the midterm. There will be no extensions for the final project. You must complete the midterm and final project to pass the class.
3. Class participation is expected and will help your final grade. Everyone is expected to contribute. Lack of participation will reduce your participation grade. Hearing from each of you makes for a more enriching class for all of us.
4. No texting or any use of cell phones or other forms of electronic communication during class. Doing so will have a negative impact on your grade. Computers for class work ONLY. Turn off your messaging on your laptop during class. Messaging during class will lower your participation grade.
5. This class will provide an understanding of how to write and produce content and tools used to engage traditional and emerging media. We will examine the rapidly changing fields of digital media and their roles in the relationship between public relations and the modern media.
6. This course will introduce students to identifying the importance and impact of public relations in everyday business.
7. This class will provide students the opportunity to be the public relations professional for a client and create and implement a public relations campaign, producing all of the pivotal elements that are necessary to provide to the media.
8. One of the most important skills of a public relations professional is the ability to compile well-written, concise and effective materials that will make the client more attractive to media in order for them to feature that client.
9. Class starts at on time. Chronic tardiness will affect your participation grade, as will absences. You don't have to ask me for permission to miss class, leave early or come late. I leave those decisions to you; however, you will lose participation points. There is no make-up for in-class work for missed classes.
10. If you are requesting an excused absence, you must provide documentation and you must inform me prior to start of class.
11. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a fellow student. I do not email notes or handouts.
12. Assignments are due at the time I designate. Assignments not following directions will be graded lower. If There should only be one discussion going on at a time in class. Paying attention to the speaker, whether it is the instructor, fellow student or guest is a sign of respect and professionalism. Disruptive behavior, such as talking out of turn and carrying on side conversations, will negatively impact your grade.
13. The syllabus is our guideline and will change during the course of the semester to accommodate current events and speaker schedules.
14. You are expected to check Blackboard every week for updates on homework and assignments. I will post the week's homework within 24 hours of our last class. You are also responsible for checking your USC email account, which is how I will communicate with you. The homework schedule will be reflected on Blackboard.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:

1. I am open to your questions and welcome the opportunity to discuss any issues concerning you. Please don't hesitate to talk to me, email me or call me. Never hesitate to reach out.
2. I am fair. When you get an assignment back from me, you should have a good idea why you earned the grade you did and what can be done to improve your writing. However, if things are not clear, let's talk. The more discussion, the better the understanding.
3. This syllabus is a general guideline for what we will cover during the semester. There will be in-class writing homework and other assignments. Feel free to suggest topics that are of interest to you and I will do my best to incorporate those ideas into assignments so that we can broaden our horizons into more diverse storytelling.

4. I'll guide you along to improve your writing, but feel free to help guide our discussions. Bring to class your questions, observations and opinions about how you see the role of public relations at work in the real world. Our most pertinent and interesting class time will come from what's happening in our world today.
5. I am available for questions and conversations before and after class and by appointment. Ready access is through email. I will respond to all messages within 24 hours, unless my message service indicates otherwise.

Description of Assignments

- In-class assignments/homework
- Take-home writing assignments
- Midterm Examination
- Final project online newsroom
- Participation

Grading

Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Participation	10%
In-class Assignments/Homework	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Writing assignments	25%
Final Project	35%
TOTAL	100%

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

1. You must bring your laptop to every class. I advise you to bring a charger as well. If you cannot complete the in- class assignments, you will receive no credit.
2. *"The AP Stylebook," 55th Edition, 2020-2022*
3. Dictionaries and other writing references are indispensable. You need to have easy access to one or more guides to spelling, grammar, punctuation and writing style.
4. As needed, additional reading assignments will be given during the semester.
5. Make a news outlet your opening page. Be familiar with a wide array of news media and current events. Additionally, please watch, listen and read the following:

Traditional Media

- *The Los Angeles Times*
and at least one other newspaper such as *NY Times*
- One news magazine such as *TIME*
- Watch television news, magazine and interview shows
- Listen to radio news and talk radio (*KNX, NPR*)

Digital Media

- Daily Beast
- techcrunch.com
- Huffington Post
- Mashable

Owned Media Examples

- Cisco (<https://newsroom.cisco.com/>)
- Coca-Cola (<https://www.coca-colacompany.com>)

Paid Media Examples

- Taboola (<https://Taboola.com>)
- Outbrain (<https://www.outbrain.com>)

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Assignments will be written in and out of class and presented in class based on in class instruction and learning.

Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

Grading Standards

Public Relations

“A” projects have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material. All required elements included (catchy headline, solid lead, varied vocabulary; supporting facts/figures; quotes as required). Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in packaging/distribution method. High end of scale: publishable today as is.

“B” projects have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes. One or more required elements missing or poorly displayed (i.e., boring headline; confusing lead, etc.). Shows potential as a good writer. Adhered to inverted pyramid. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary element such as astonishing lead or little-known facts or pithy quote. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing.

“C” projects have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. May have adhered to inverted pyramid but strayed at beginning or end. Hackneyed elements such as trite headline or uninteresting lead. Little or no facts/figures included. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Publishable with major editing.

“D” projects have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of journalistic style/standards. Needs to work with writing coach.

“F” projects are not rewritable, late or not turned in.

Grading Timeline

Weekly assignments and homework should be graded prior to next class meeting.

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments are due on the dates specified. Without prior discussion and agreement with the instructor. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](#) website.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/15/2021 – 4/30/2021; Final Exam Period: 5/5-12/2021)

Friday, February 5: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, February 5: Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, February 9: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, March 5: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. Mark of “W” will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, March 5: Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Friday, April 9: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

January 20/WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION. A LOOK A MEDIA CHANNELS

- Housekeeping: Presentation of syllabus. Going over class requirements and outlining of what to expect over the semester.
- Down to business: Beginning to define who are the media and what do they need or want with the public relations professional.
- Summary of strategic media channels used by public relations – traditional, emerging tradigital, social and owned.
- Discuss the need to create content for all of these channels through a strategic communication process: Developing target audiences, messaging and connecting with appropriate channels.

In class:

- Review of news stories on each media channel. How does the traditional mainstream news story compare to tradigital or social media reports?
 - Review news releases from distribution sites such as BusinessWire.com, PRnewswire.com or MarketWire.com.
 - Discuss if you think it is an effective announcement.

Homework:

Track a story on Business Wire, Marketwire or PRnewswire to see where it received media attention and how/if the story was changed from its original release. Bring the original story and a typed analysis of the subsequent media coverage. In addition, track how else the company played its announcement with its own vehicles: website, Twitter, Facebook, blogs, YouTube, Pinterest? List the ways the company used media channels to get the story out. Bring a news story you think was run as a result of a PR pitch. Type a brief explanation.

January 27/WEEK 2 ADVANCED MESSAGING AND AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

- Review homework.
- Discuss the perceived target audience for the PR news stories brought to class.
 - Identify key messages aimed at audience
 - Discuss why the story was carried by specific outlets
- Development of target audience, creation of messages to connect with specific audiences and the choice of outlets to reach each audience segment.
- News release review

In class:

Take any of the stories addressed in class and develop a different audience and messaging structure for the Choose a new product that’s been released in the past few months. Rework the announcement to target a new audience and choose specific outlet for whom you will write a news release.

- Packaging of materials: First the news release and then what? Bios and Advisories.
- Look at online newsrooms and the bios they publish.

In class: Now it’s your turn to be the publicist. Please select a “client” that you will work with through the duration of the semester.

Homework:

- With your specific client in mind, please write up what you want achieve with your PR campaign as well as what you feel your client needs with this PR campaign and why.
- Create a list of materials beyond the release, fact sheet and advisory you would create in order to enhance your news release story.

February 3/WEEK 3: WRITING PERSUASIVELY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

- We'll examine ways to enhance your story: blogs, features, op-eds. What are the differences, what are they used for, and when to use them.
- Creating materials for a variety of platforms: print, web, social media.
- The elements of the tools in your PR tool box – biography, fact sheet, backgrounder.
- Press release versus media alert – recognize and learn the difference.

In Class: write up a biography on your client.

Homework: Finish your client bios.

February 10/WEEK 4: MULTIMEDIA CONTENT AS A PR TOOL

- Review each individual client bios
- The news release has evolved from the traditional written media relations tool to a complex multi-media advocacy tool to promote an individual, company, non-profit or government's position.

In class:

- Review online newsrooms.
- Write a press release and media alert about your client.

Homework: complete the press release and media alert on your client.

February 17/WEEK 5: PR TERMINOLOGY

- Review everyone's press releases and media alerts.
- We will go over and learn the important terminology used in the public relations field.

In class: review media alert versus press release.

- While the press release is an important component in your media relations toolbox, equally important are the ancillary materials that reporters use. To be viewed as a valued resource, you must also know how to prepare other materials to tell your story: Feature stories, backgrounders, bios – other ways to hook the media.

In class: Op-Ed

Homework: Midterm next week. Bring laptops and chargers.

February 24/WEEK 6: MIDTERM

- In-class writing exam: Writing of elements covered in class to date.

Homework: Research and select a specific journalist at a media outlet (can be print, broadcast or online) in preparation to pitch your client. Please give reasoning behind your selection and make sure the journalist and outlet meet with your pr objective for your client.

March 3/WEEK 7: ONLINE NEWSROOMS/ STORYTELLING WITH VISUALS/PITCHING JOURNALISTS

- What do they look like; what's in them; who uses them and why?
- How to create a digital press kit and develop an effective online newsroom.
- Fundamentals of WordPress: Creating posts and pages, inserting multimedia, using links, theme design, creating menus and sub-menus.
- Pitching journalists and crafting that email pitch – noting particular journalists quirks, likes/dislikes and making a personal connection with her/him.
- Trend stories versus features.
- The art of media image storytelling, writing compelling titles and photo captions.

Homework: create a pitch letter targeting a specific journalist on your client and give reasoning why they should feature them (can be print, broadcast or online outlet).

March 10/Week 8: STILL PHOTO/VISUAL STORYTELLING

- Review photos from homework week #6
- Monumental photos that impacted history and examine the content, message and placement of those photos.

- Skillset to utilize when taking effective photo; editing it and writing a caption.
- Create personal websites.
- Take an effective photo, edit it, and write a caption and post to blog.

Homework: Take your own photo, edit it and write an effective caption.

March 17/WEEK 9: CREATION OF B-ROLL VIDEO/PRESS JUNKETS

- A summary of video production techniques using modern HD video cameras including mobile phones, SLRs, etc.
- What makes effective video?
- An overview of editing techniques for non-professional editing programs such as iMovie.
- Current press junket examples in the media – controlled versus uncontrolled.
- Talking points for clients.

In class:

- Mock press junket – break into teams and will role play as publicist, journalist and interviewee.
- Creation of b-roll.

Homework: your thoughts on the mock press junket – your impressions, what you learned, wish you learned, thought you knew, etc. and Polish b-roll and post to WordPress.

March 24/WEEK 10: CREATING B-ROLL

- Beyond b-roll: interviews.
- Review talking point strategies – avoiding the skeletons and focus on what is the message.

In class: Interview a classmate and gather b-roll.

Review talking point strategies.

Homework: Put together talking point strategies for your client

Create video package of classmate interview. Post to WordPress.

March 31/WEEK 11: PITCHING THE MEDIA & THE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

- Elements of a public relations campaign.
- How and when to talk to the media; what media to target; how to get your story delivered.
- How to prepare for an interview. How to develop key messages. How to weave main points into responses. How to deal with the tough questions

In Class:

- Review all elements done so far in PR tool kit
- Write an email pitch.

Homework:

- Finish email pitch
- Start your PR campaign sheets.
- **Work on final projects**

April 7/WEEK 12: WELLNESS DAY—NO CLASS

April 14/WEEK 13 CREATING A MEDIA EVENT AND WORKING WITH MEDIA

- Media Events: press conferences, parties, press events. When to use them, when to avoid them and how to throw them.
- What works and, almost importantly, what doesn't. Giving the media materials flexibility to meet the needs of different audiences.
- The relationship between the public relations and the media. Tools for working with the media.
- Making sure your pitch isn't the tree that falls in the forest when no one is in the forest.

In Class: Students will work in small groups to develop a plan for a media event.

Homework:

- **Finalize final projects**
- Identify a recent example of a media event and write up whether or not you feel it was handled correctly and why or why not.

April 21/WEEK 14 PRESENTATION SKILLS

- Honing your abilities to communicate clearly and with purpose.
- Preparing key messages *before* you speak in order to highlight the most critical elements you want your audience to remember.
- Techniques to avoid public speaking pitfalls.

In Class

- Presentation practice
- Work on final project websites

Homework: Work on final projects.

April 28/WEEK 15: INTEGRATING MEDIA COMPONENTS INTO A ROBUST CROSS-PLATFORM CAMPAIGN

- Discussion of the overall importance of reputation both for the PR professional and the client.
- You've developed all your media materials and had your media event, now let's amplify, aggregate and curate across our social and owned media channels.
- Practice Presentation skills – preparing key messages before you speak in order to highlight the most crucial elements you want to convey to your audience and techniques to avoid public speaking pitfalls.

In Class: Final summative semester review

Homework: Complete work on final project.

May 7/FINAL EXAM PERIOD

Friday, May 7: 2-4 p.m.

Final projects due/presentations

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

I expect you to attend each class with homework done and prepared to present to class as noted. If you cannot make it to class, please try to let me know in advance. If you miss class, check with a classmate to catch up on the information provided. Please regularly (daily) check your USC email and Blackboard as those are my ways to communicate with you.

Communication

I am diligent about keeping in touch and I expect you to do the same. I will always respond promptly (within 24 hours) to an email and if you need additional help/time to meet, we can arrange a zoom call that mutually works.

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally

unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators."

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]

<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.

About Your Instructor

A seasoned public relations professional, Nan Sumski possesses over a quarter of a century of entertainment public relations experience. She recently consulted as the Publicity Lead on the Daytime Emmy Award-winning syndicated talk “The Real.” For the past several years, Sumski has mounted successful publicity and marketing campaigns for such varied clients as the CBS Television Distribution daytime series “The Doctors,” the American Forces Network children’s series “Hey Wordy!” and its parent company, Slangman Enterprises as well as the Dubai Documentary Film Festival and many others. She’s also held posts as PR Managing Editor at the Screen Actors Guild Awards and Executive Director, Media Relations for the Disney ABC Television Network, overseeing all television animation projects on numerous platforms. Currently, she is consulting with several clients, including a fitness organization, web series and an author, as well as guest lecturing.

Sumski has the distinction of being the first and only head of Publicity for Spelling Television Inc., handpicked for the post by the legendary producer Aaron Spelling and reporting directly to him. While there, she was responsible for publicity for such long-running series as “Charmed,” “7th Heaven” and the critically acclaimed Lifetime series “Any Day Now,” among others. Prior to that, she spent several years at Warner Bros. Television, where she launched such hit series as “E.R.,” “Sisters,” “Hangin’ with Mr. Cooper,” “The George Carlin Show” and the syndicated talk show “The Jenny Jones Show.”

Before her career on staff at a production company, Sumski was a personal publicist responsible for Linda Lavin’s Tony® Award-winning role in the Broadway production of “Broadway Bound” and John Larroquette’s multiple Emmy® wins in the long running comedy “Night Court.”

FINAL PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

Create an online newsroom. You will come up with a topic, fact or fiction. You will include any or all of the aspects of media collateral we will cover in class, or any other material you consider relevant. Material to consider (**items in bold are required**), but not limited to:

- **News releases: at least one must be included**
- **Video: Required** (Only include video that you create. It does not have to be perfect. I am looking for effort, not expertise.) Video should be no less than 1 minute.
- **Fact sheets: at least one is required**
- Bios/Profiles
- Backgrounders
- Feature stories
- Advisories
- Pitch letters
- Artwork (original creation encouraged)
- Photos/Graphics: **At least three photos and/or graphic design elements must be your own creation.**
- Logos (You may use an existing logo, but I strongly encourage an effort on your creating a new look.)
- **Embed .pdf versions of your written media at the bottom of each page.** This includes releases, fact sheets, advisories, pitch letters.

Expand your content creation to include creative and unique ways to tell your story. It doesn't have to fit the defined pieces listed above. The most successful content is based on creativity and variety.

Be sure that your project has depth. This is your chance to show me that you've learned and understood the elements to public relations writing. Don't be superficial and don't be short on your use of collateral material. Make sure your copy is clean. You lose points for sloppy copy. There will be no way you can get an A on this project if you turn in a project that includes spelling, grammar and style errors.

GRADING ELEMENTS:

- Overall design of site: Clean and creative.
- Solid content: create enough pieces to illuminate your topic. Show that you can create content with substance and depth.
- Variety: Don't create all your pieces around just one hook. Show that you can create an array of materials with different storytelling elements. Mix it up with newsworthy, human interest, creative and varied storytelling.
- Quality of writing: pay attention to style, grammar, spelling and formatting. If you have sloppy copy, your grade will be lower.
- Emphasis on creating visually interesting pages. Unlike your 209 project, which focused on written collateral, this project is meant to combine the importance of writing with the importance of multimedia. As an online newsroom, look to make each page more than just text: include photos, graphics and other visual elements to make the pages interesting. Not every page has to have visuals, but you should be considering how to make the majority of your pages a mix of written content and some form or forms of multimedia.

REQUIREMENTS:

- News Release: keep in mind who the audience is and what outlet you see your news release running.
- Video of at least a minute in length. One video must be 100 percent your creation. Video, photos and graphics must be yours. I am not looking for video perfection; I am looking for the strategy behind the story you are telling.
- Navigation bar with at least one pull-down menu.
- Inclusion of photos and graphics. Aside from the video, you may use photos/graphics and logos from other sources. Where you can, add a photo/video credit directly on the page. Do not have every photo and graphic come from another source. Some visual creation must be your own. At least three photos must be your own.
- Embedded pdf versions for standard media relations material (release, fact sheet, advisory, pitch letters).
- Email me with a detailed list of what photos/graphics/videos/logos etc. are entirely your creation and what are taken from outside sources.

SUGGESTION: Create your own idea. Make your own plan to introduce a new restaurant, or launch a new product, or promote a band, for example. In my experience, the more you create your own idea, the stronger your

materials. If you are going to choose an already existing topic, I urge you to not rely on materials that have already been created. It's too easy to use turns of phrases, collateral ideas and physical designs that you see in someone else's work. The more you apply your own creativity, the better the product.

All written materials in your project must be written by you. DO NOT include written materials produced, written or created by anyone else. If there is even one sentence taken from another source, you will receive a failing grade.

Due at 2 p.m. on Friday, May 7.