

Fall 2021 – Thursdays – 6:30-9 p.m.

Section: 21554D

Location: Online

Instructor: Lisa Cracchiolo Tush

Office: Online

Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom or phone

I. Course Description

This course introduces students to the array of writing assignments today's PR and advertising practitioners might encounter. It is divided into four distinct modules:

- 1) Mastering the School of Journalism's rigorous writing standards. Through in-class drills and homework, students will learn to organize and plan their writing both with and without deadline pressure
- 2) Applying those skills to standard persuasive PR and advertising copywriting assignments.
- 3) Tackling the prevailing digital standards such as writing for social media, websites and other digital media as well as traditional printed materials.
- 4) Learning the basics of strategic messaging and copywriting in the advertising realm.

Students will be expected to approach their assignments with a professional attitude and a willingness to learn new techniques. Good writing takes **practice**, hard work and passion.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

PR 535 is designed to provide students with the following outcomes: to develop competence – and confidence – in writing mechanics and grammar, headlines, structure and the ability to express information clearly and write in an objective style; to delve into the world of advertising content development, specifically copywriting; to craft persuasive material with the use of facts and figures, and knowledge of when to apply objective or persuasive styles. Students will abandon the concepts they've learned for essay and term-paper writing throughout their education, and this takes time and thoughtful practice.

Therefore, the goal of this class is to teach students how to:

- Master the fundamentals of proper PR and advertising writing styles with sensitivity to the requirements of different situations and mediums
- Judge the importance of information, set priorities and tailor writing to meet the needs of different audiences
- Edit and proofread any material so it is publishable
- Craft persuasive messages for any medium that meet the client's objectives
- Devise digital ad copy for a variety of mediums, including print, online, radio and outdoor based on sound advertising strategy

Course Notes

This is not a lecture class; you will write on deadline every week, much of it during class sessions. I will guide you through fundamental characteristics of effective, persuasive writing for PR and advertising and you will then practice, practice, practice with her assistance. The pace of the class is meant to replicate what it is like to receive and execute writing assignments in the workplace. Your deliverable at the end of the semester will be a comprehensive information kit that showcases your mastery of writing, editing and proofreading.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Students are required to bring their laptops to every class session [during online sessions, students should be able to craft materials on Word during class time]. Every session includes an in-class writing assignment that the student will execute with feedback from the instructor. Each week, I will provide a review of the previous week's homework assignments, then, I will introduce new writing elements. In addition, I will frame each new element in the context of the chosen client's objectives. It is not unusual for the coursework to be slowed down sometime during the semester as students learn to:

- perfect accepted writing standards
- write in active (not passive) voice
- edit and proofread their work
- understand how the content they are devising fits into the PR or advertising realms – or both.

These assignments culminate in a comprehensive information package (full description below) that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the principles and techniques taught throughout the semester.

ADVERTISING MODULE: While this course is primarily dedicated to improving your persuasive writing and editing skills, you also will be exposed to PR and advertising strategies as they relate to messaging and content assignments. *The course will keep pace with the PR and advertising fundamentals you'll learn simultaneously in PR 508.*

To maximize your understanding of advertising copywriting, you are expected to read specific chapters of an advertising textbook in advance of and during the 4-week ad copywriting module.

WRITING EXERCISES and ASSIGNMENTS: Writing on deadline is an essential skill for public relations and advertising. Students need to be able to do assignments in Microsoft Word or a similar program, and type fast! Whenever possible, avoid submitting your work in pdf format as I am unable to provide detailed edits.

Writing assignments must be double-spaced in 12-point type unless otherwise noted.

In addition to in-class writing instruction, I will hold writing "salons" in between formal class sessions where we will discuss specific PR and advertising strategies and how they drive

messaging and content development and distribution. The “salon” sessions are listed in the syllabus. You must attend at least ONE salon and actively participate.

HOMEWORK DEADLINES:

All students must submit in-class assignments at the end of class in printed form via Blackboard. These must be posted no later than three nights before class: **Monday by 9:00 p.m.** unless otherwise specified. Be sure to submit your work as a Word doc and not a pdf so that I may provide you with detailed edits/feedback.

I strongly suggest that you try to upload your work a few minutes earlier than the deadline in case of server problems or other technical trouble. *If you miss the Blackboard deadline, send it anyway. It will be accepted but the assignment will be marked down. If it is more than an hour late, you will receive a zero, but the work will still be reviewed.*

IF YOU WILL BE ABSENT, try to let me know before class by email or text message. You are still responsible for finding out what transpired during class and to confirm what the homework is. You may make up in-class writing exercises and you will have access to relevant handouts/instructional materials. Recordings of the class sessions will be available.

QUIZZES:

Quizzes will be given regularly. The topic of each quiz is listed on the syllabus/weekly schedule. You will be expected to learn the mechanics of proofreading and AP style and will be tested on specific elements throughout the semester. You also are expected to learn and be able to demonstrate the Inverted Pyramid and basic advertising messaging strategy.

MIDTERM:

The **midterm** will test your ability to write on deadline and to proofread and edit your work. You must take the midterm in order to pass the class.

WRITING SALONS:

There will be (3) one-hour Writing Salons during the semester via Zoom. The nature of these Salons will vary based on where we are in the coursework and which questions students submit in advance. You are to attend ONE of the Salons and actively participate. Salon dates will be agreed upon during the first class.

FINAL PROJECT – The Information Kit:

By the second class, you will choose a topic that will be the subject of several assignments and will relate to the final project. The topic should relate to a product or industry you’re interested in, as it will need to keep your attention all semester. Here is an example – “Nike” is too general; specialized shoelaces is too narrow a topic. Your topic may be fictional but realistic.

Past topics for information kits include the following companies and their “news” –

- Sephora – new in-store recycling program

- Soho House – opening of a Palm Springs location
- Patagonia – promote its Worn Wear program
- Book publishing – promote new YA book by R.F. Kuang
- Oatly milk – Barista competition
- University Tees – opening of first brick-and-mortar location
- Warby Parker eyewear – promote children’s eye exams in Philadelphia
- Baby Bullet food processor – host children and parenting information and product fair
- Nike – promote partnership with NBA player Giannis Antetokounmpo and youth fitness

You will prepare a detailed information package that contains common elements PR practitioners rely on. It also must include some advertising “crossover” materials that today’s professional needs to be prepared to craft as the two disciplines intersect. There are required and optional elements, all designed to help you hone your writing skills AND to craft a package that is worthy to share with a potential employer. **THE INFORMATION KIT IS DUE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7 BY 7:00 P.M. NO LATE SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED**

Class presentations will be held Thursday, December 9, 7-9 p.m., a format will be provided for the presentations.

All information kits must include 5 components:

1. An advertising **Creative Brief** per the model shown in class that justifies the following 3 required elements:
2. A **news release** with an accompanying strategy for which media outlets to send it to
3. A **paid social** element (unique Facebook and Instagram-sponsored posts)
4. An **advertising tagline** for your organization’s campaign and copy for two complementary pieces (billboard and digital screen promotion)

In addition, the kit must include TWO additional elements. Discuss these elements with the instructor if you are unsure what to select. These are your options:

5. An **infographic** designed for posting on multiple platforms (with emphasis on the copy not the design)
6. A **podcast ad script** (15 seconds/45 words plus the name of the podcast that you are targeting with an explanation about why you chose that podcast (audience demographic, host, topic, ad tie-in, etc.). *This option also requires a recorded element.*
7. A **thought-leadership piece** (taking a stance/position) for a social platform such as LinkedIn (500 words minimum). Assume you have influencer status!

8. **Fact sheet** (1-page, single-line spacing, 12 pt. font) and accompanying **FAQ** of a minimum of 6 questions and answers (2-pages, single-line spacing, 12 pt. font) *If you select this option, you must produce both complementary pieces*

You will present your information kit during finals week (Dec. 8 – Dec. 15). Your 5-minute presentation should cover: the basic overview of your selected topic; a brief discussion of each element; any challenges you faced during the planning, writing and/or editing of the materials.

Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

| Assignment | Grade |
|---|-------------|
| In-class writing, homework, quizzes, breakout group projects, participation in Salon session(s) | 40% |
| Midterm | 25% |
| Final | 35% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

In this course, participation is factored into your in-class work as well as your comments/questions related to the writing assignments. A separate grading rubric will be provided for your Final Project.

b. Grading Scale

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| 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 |

c. Grading Standards

Writing courses in the Public Relations program follow the following grading scale:

“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.

You will receive an individual assessment based on this rubric for every writing assignment. You should aim to see steady improvement as the semester progresses.

In addition, we maintain the highest standards of ethical writing/editing. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of “F” and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:

- Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information (unless you are specifically assigned to insert fictional facts/quotes by your instructor for learning purposes)
- Plagiarizing an article, part of a script/article or information from any source. This includes improper attribution, lifting ideas from another source and/or representing any work as your own.
- Missing a deadline.

d. Grading Timeline

In general, all written submissions will be graded before the next class session so that students may keep pace of the writing fundamentals. Your midterm and final projects will be graded and returned within one week of submission.

Assignment Rubrics

The general grading rubric for coursework falls under the Grading Standards section above. Separate grading rubrics for advertising submissions, the midterm and the information kit will be shown and discussed during class.

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments are due on the date noted on the syllabus unless otherwise noted. Exceptions will be announced during class and noted via email. Submit your written submissions to Blackboard in standard Word format (generally 12-point type, double spaced unless otherwise noted) and NOT a pdf!

All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F. **I do not accept make-up assignments.**

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

1. *"The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law"* ***Required**
 - a. Latest edition preferred. You are allowed to utilize the online version, but in my experience, it helps to have the hard copy with you while executing in-class assignments.
2. Hey Whipple, Squeeze This by Luke Sullivan and Edward Boches ***Required**
3. The AdWeek Copywriting Handbook: The Ultimate Guide to Writing Powerful Advertising and Marketing Copy from One of America's Top Copywriters by Joseph Sugarman ***Recommended**
4. 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. *"Woe is I"* by Patricia O'Connor and *"The Elements of Style"* by Strunk and White are among the best of the shorter volumes. The bottom line: know where to look when you have questions about writing.
5. Newspapers, magazines, trade publications, websites and other publications as required by assignments or your own interests. **(See separate instructions on the PR 535 Blackboard "content" page for free student subscriptions to Wall Street Journal, New York Times and PR Week.)**
6. Some reading materials for this course may be posted to Blackboard.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Additionally, please watch, listen and read from the following categories:

Traditional Media -

- The Los Angeles Times and The New York Times
- One news magazine such as TIME
- Follow news outlets on Twitter to stay current
- Listen to radio news and talk radio such as NPR

Digital Media -

- Daily Beast
- Huffington Post
- Mash

Owned Media Examples -

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

Paid Media Examples -

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

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.

IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COURSE

Please review the pre-recorded session on Tips for Effective PR Writing, posted on Blackboard.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/23/21 – 12/3/21)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20213/calendar/>

Friday, September 10: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, September 10: Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

Friday, September 10: Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall

Tuesday, September 14: Last day to add or drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

Friday, October 8: 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, October 8: 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, November 12: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

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.

| | Topics/Daily Activities | Readings and Homework | Deliverable/Due Dates |
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| Week 1 Thur., Aug. 26 | Introduction & Syllabus Review: Welcome! | Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 3 – Writing to Clarify and Simplify | Deliverables: Complete your readings by next class session. |

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| | <p>Icebreaker activity. Instructor and student introductions.</p> <p>What is persuasive writing? Public relations practitioners are essentially storytellers: we wax poetic about a product, a service, a new movie release, or a new corporate policy. We will review side-by-side comparisons of passive versus active voice, and objective versus persuasive copy.</p> <p>Introduction to the Inverted Pyramid: we will review the pre-recorded media piece on the elements of the Inverted Pyramid (on Blackboard)</p> <p>Introduction to the Information Kit (Final Project): Review elements, selection of a topic and schedule.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Craft a 400-word piece on your favorite brand to help me gauge your current writing ability. You must give a brief description of the brand, then explain <i>why</i> it is your favorite.</p> | <p>Ch. 4 – Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation</p> <p>AP Stylebook – Punctuation guide, A, B</p> <p>Handouts – “Types of Leads” “Art of Persuasion” article</p> <p>Homework: Review and edit your piece on your favorite brand</p> | <p>Favorite brand writing assignment – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |
| <p>Week 2 Thur., Sept. 2</p> | <p>Effective PR Writing: We will discuss elements of the Inverted Pyramid approach to writing with particular emphasis on lead paragraphs and nut graphs.</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 9 Writing for Public Media (pp. 179-190)</p> <p>AP Stylebook – C, D, E, F</p> | <p>Deliverables: Your 3 lead graphs – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Espacio Hotel news release (lead and nut graph) – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |

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| | <p>Introduce the writing of quotes, elaboration graphs and inserting boilerplates for a news release.</p> <p>Determine date/time of Writing Salon I for next week</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Craft a series of leads and suitable nut graphs for Espacio Hotel, with emphasis on newswriting. (Practice writing a lead graph from 3 news stories (handout is on Blackboard))</p> <p>Quiz: Homophones</p> | <p>Review “Gallery of Award-Winning Headlines” on BB and be prepared to discuss during our headline review session.</p> <p>Homework: Write the lead and nut graph for the Espacio Hotel news release.</p> <p>Finish your lead graphs for the 3 news stories.</p> <p>Improving your persuasive writing: review the pre-recorded lectures “Cut the Clichés” and “Dog Puppies” posted on Blackboard.</p> | |
| <p>Week 3 Thur., Sept. 9</p> | <p>Writing that Sizzles: Throw out everything you learned about essay titles and term paper monikers: we’re going to craft more than a dozen headlines during this fast-paced session. In addition, we’ll examine the importance of quotations: who to quote and how.</p> <p>One way to enhance your storytelling is to employ bullet point copy. Despite the fact that you encounter it every day, you probably don’t have much practice using bulleted copy. You’ll learn how to incorporate bullet points into elaboration grafs. To end the news release, we typically insert what is called “boilerplate” material (see Inverted</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 7 – Writing to Persuade (pp. 127-146)</p> <p>AP Stylebook – G, H, I, J, K</p> <p>Homework: Make revisions to your Espacio Hotel news release</p> <p>Write the lead and nut graphs for the MacArthur Foundation news release</p> | <p>Deliverables: MacArthur Foundation news release (lead and nut graph) – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>The complete Espacio Hotel news release – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Writing Salon I: during Week 3, I will host a Writing Salon where you will be able to pose questions about any of the assignments and where you might be experiencing difficulty. We will review the importance of careful proofreading/editing. Date and time TBD</p> |

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| | <p>Pyramid structure). These elements, along with a strong lead and nut graph, constitute a standard news release.</p> <p>Breakout groups: For the 3 news stories from Week 2, you will work in teams to identify who might be the logical experts or spokespeople to quote.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Craft the final portions of the Espacio news release to practice writing quotes, elaboration graphs and inserting boilerplates.</p> <p>Quiz: AP style</p> | | |
| <p>Week 4 Thur., Sept. 16</p> | <p>Writing that Sizzles: The Headlines Have It! Throw out everything you know about essay titles and term paper monikers: we’re going to craft more than a dozen headlines for a variety of purposes during this fast-paced session.</p> <p>Breakout Groups: For the MacArthur release, you will work in teams to identify who might be the logical experts for a quotation graf. Work together to write the quotation graf.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Add the quote, elaboration and boilerplate graphs to</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 10 - Writing for Traditional or Legacy Media</p> <p>AP Stylebook – L, M, N, O, P</p> <p>Read the PR Studies Guidelines to Inclusion and Anti-Racism in Content, Part 1: Writing</p> <p>Handouts – “What is a News Release” “Planning the Evolution of Press Releases”</p> <p>Homework: Finish the MacArthur news release. Add the quotation and elaboration graphs and the boilerplate.</p> | <p>Deliverables: MacArthur news release – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Simplifying the Complex: All about messaging and story structure. All About Inclusion. We will review the ordering of facts for news and advertising purposes. Then you will practice re-ordering information on the news releases you crafted last week, discuss which works best, then carefully edit and proofread your segments to submit via email by Monday at 9 p.m.</p> |

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| | <p>your MacArthur news release.</p> <p>Quiz: AP style</p> | <p>Practice writing headlines and lead graphs for Subaru and ball of lint events (find the document on Blackboard).</p> | |
| <p>Week 5 Thur., Sept. 23</p> | <p>FAQs and Fact Sheets:</p> <p>Here we expand the Inverted Pyramid, adding layers as needed, depending upon our audience. Journalists rely heavily on an organization’s fact sheet to craft their stories, while an array of audiences – especially customers – gravitate to FAQ pages on an organization’s website. Both are essential tools in the PR practitioner’s toolkit.</p> <p>Determine date/time of Writing Salon II for next week</p> <p>In-class writing exercise:</p> <p>Write both an FAQ (minimum of 8 questions and 8 answers) and a fact sheet on an organization TBD.</p> <p>Quiz: AP style</p> | <p>Readings: AP Stylebook – Q, R, S, T, U, V</p> <p>Review a thought-leadership piece from among the samples Professor Tush has posted on BB.</p> <p>Homework: Depending upon how far you get with your fact sheet and complementary FAQs, you may be able to take them home to polish.</p> <p>View the PowerPoint on What is an FAQ Anyway? on Blackboard and other tutorial sources.</p> | <p>Deliverables: Fact sheet and FAQ —due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |
| <p>Week 6 Thur., Sept. 30</p> | <p>Crafting A Thought Leadership Piece: You’ve spent much of your academic career being told not to editorialize and not to have an opinion. Well, public relations practitioners will need to know how to write in the editorial or “opinion” voice. It starts</p> | <p>Readings: AP Stylebook – W, X, Y, Z</p> <p>https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/01/17/five-highly-persuasive-digital-marketing-tactics/#df11d217ab2</p> <p>Homework:</p> | <p>Midterm: The take-home portion of your midterm – due September 23 by 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Prepare for in-class portion by reviewing assigned readings.</p> <p>Thought-leadership piece –due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |

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| | <p>with a compelling headline and includes a specific tone and jaw-dropping close. AND, these assignments are generally written for someone else in the organization, mainly an industry guru, sometimes known as a thought leader.</p> <p>In-Class Writing Assignment: You will craft a 200-word thought-leadership piece that will be due at the end of class. Topic and voice to be determined by class vote!</p> <p>Review take-home portion of the midterm.</p> <p>Quiz: pronouns</p> | Complete the 200-word thought-leadership piece. | Writing Salon II: Date/Time TBD |
| <p>Week 7 Thur., Oct. 7 (Prof. Tush in Sarasota, FL)</p> | <p>Midterm: In-class portion</p> <p>In-Class Writing Assignment: Begin working on the first and second elements of your information kit (I recommend the news release, fact sheet or FAQ)</p> | <p>Readings: “Whipple” – Ch. 3 - Ready Fire! Aim “What to say comes before how to say it”</p> <p>Please watch the pre-recorded Role of the Advertising Strategist before next week’s class session.</p> <p>Homework: Finish working on the first and second elements of your information kit.</p> | <p>Deliverables: In preparation for our next session on Week 9, please review the TV, magazine and other sample ads posted on Blackboard. You should come to class prepared to discuss them because you will craft your own complementary elements!</p> <p>Also, select your favorite influencer and/or podcaster and be prepared to offer her/him up for our class group assignment on Week 9.</p> <p>The first and second elements of your information kit – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |
| <p>Week 8 Thur., Oct. 14</p> | Fall Recess | | |

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| <p>Week 9 Thur., Oct. 21</p> | <p>Owned Media: eBulletins, websites After we review our midterm, we will consider “What is Owned Media?” Overview of newsletters, bulletins and infographics. How does “owned” or “controlled” media differ from other materials? We control the messaging and we own the distribution platform!</p> <p>Infographics: What are they and how are they used? Students will search online for sample infographics and share with the class with an explanation of what is attractive about the layout/design, etc.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Timed writing activities for a social media post, and in-house ebulletin boards.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Create an infographic utilizing a prepared template (Canva is recommended). This piece should be suitable for posting on Pinterest or as an electronic bulletin board announcement. *If you have elected an infographic as one of your information package elements, you may use your selected topic for this assignment.</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 5 – Social Media Writing (pp. 82-92) Ch. 11 – Newsletters (pp. 245-260)</p> <p>“Whipple” – Ch. 4 – The Sudden Cessation of Stupidity, How to get ideas</p> <p>Homework: Develop a list of 6 articles for each of the newsletters distributed to the following audiences: City of Pasadena residents, all employees of Home Depot, American Airlines executive platinum frequent flyers</p> <p>Create an infographic for a topic of your choice.</p> <p>Select what you think are 3 great ads (of any medium) and be prepared to tell the class why during the next class session.</p> | <p>Deliverables: List of newsletter stories – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Infographic – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |
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| <p>Week 10 Thur., Oct. 28</p> | <p>Crafting Your Pitch: PR and advertising practitioners will need to know how to write a pitch to an array of possible media targets. Introduction to pitch letters: the good, the bad, and the ugly! Breakout groups: Discuss student selections of “3 great ads” (of any medium)</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Write a pitch on a topic to be determined jointly by the class. Identify three media outlets to receive the pitch letter.</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 4 – Writing for Select Audiences (pp. 152-162, 165-176) “Whipple” – Ch. 5 - Write When You Get Work “Completing an idea” Review the Creative Brief document for Week 11.</p> <p>Homework: Begin working on the third element of your information kit (news release, infographic, fact sheet, FAQ, or paid social ad)</p> | <p>Deliverables: Third element of your information kit – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |
| <p>Week 11 Thur., Nov. 4</p> | <p>Crafting an Ad, An Overview: We will establish the general tenets of advertising writing. During this class we will discuss ad strategy and the role of the Creative Brief. The focus will be on what advertisers call 4 C’s research on audience composition and insights. (4 C’s = consumer, category, company, culture). Brainstorm ad mediums. What are the merits and limitations of each type?</p> <p>Taglines: What are they, how are they created and how are they used? We’ll look at slogans for Chobani vs. Voskos Greek style yogurt and other competing consumer products.</p> | <p>Readings: Newsom & Haynes – Ch. 9 – Writing for Select Audiences (section on writing ad copy, pp. 206-218) “Whipple” – Ch. 6 - The Virtues of Simplicity “Why it’s hard to pound in a nail sideways” “The Intersection of Public Relations and Social Media Marketing,” Jessica Crozier, InQuest Marketing (posted on Blackboard) https://inquestmarketing.com/blog/the-intersection-of-public-relations-and-social-media-marketing/ https://ambercreative.sg/blog/distinguishing-between-headlines-and-taglines</p> | <p>Deliverables: Fourth element of your information kit – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |

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| | <p>(How to Write a Tagline ppt)</p> <p>Headlines: How are they different from taglines?</p> <p>Breakout groups: Craft a 4 C's map for a major brand in teams, then reunite to discuss</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Find the tagline for 5 of your favorite products or services – write a short analysis of the tagline from your perspective. How effective is the tagline?</p> <p>Craft four different headlines for a print ad.</p> | <p>Homework: Begin working on the fourth element of your information kit (fact sheet, FAQ or other previously listed options)</p> <p>Collect 3 advertising taglines to share in the next class that you believe to be effective in communicating the unique value of a company or product.</p> | |
| <p>Week 12 Thur., Nov.11</p> | <p>Ad Copywriting I: We will determine how effective the 3 ads/taglines are that you collected last week for homework.</p> <p>We will review a series of TV, radio, online and magazine ads and discuss the messaging.</p> <p>A copywriter has only so many words with which to convince, so this week we will work on various nuances to copywriting: What makes an effective ad? Class discusses metaphor, simile, hyperbole and other techniques.</p> <p>During this session, you will craft 2 complementary advertising elements</p> | <p>Readings: “Whipple” – Ch. 7 - Stupid, Rong, Naughty, and Viral</p> <p>https://www.digitalmarketer.com/podcast/perpetual-traffic/persuasive-ad-copy/</p> <p>https://www.creativeblog.com/design/billboard-advertising-1131681</p> <p>https://digitalsynopsis.com/advertising/creative-billboards-outdoor-ads/</p> <p>https://www.bluelinemedi.com/docs/creating-effective-out-of-home-advertising.pdf</p> <p>Homework: Write a draft of your Creative Brief for the final project. It can be in</p> | <p>Deliverables: Creative Brief draft – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Fifth element of your information kit – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> |

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| | <p>(i.e., digital and print ads) for your information kit/final project.</p> <p>Where PR and Advertising Intersect: Review and discuss the homework reading from Jessica Crozier.</p> <p>Information Kits: We'll review and discuss common questions and issues about finalizing the info. kit.</p> <p>Determine date/time of Writing Salon III for next week</p> | <p>outline form or in paragraphs.</p> <p>Begin working on the fifth element of your information kit (opinion piece or other previously listed options)</p> | |
| <p>Week 13 Thur., Nov. 18</p> | <p>Ad Copywriting II: We continue our ad copywriting module with a virtual visit from Michael Chen, a copywriter for Zillow.</p> <p>In-class writing assignment: Mr. Chen will provide you with details of his experience as an ad copywriter and the fundamentals of advertising copywriting, then you will take a stab at writing your own!</p> | <p>Readings: "Whipple" – Ch. 8 - Why Is the Bad Guy Always More Interesting?</p> <p>Homework: Continue working on copy for the complementary ads for your final project.</p> <p>Continue to work on the Creative Brief that justifies the 3 required elements of your information kit.</p> <p>In preparation for the Week 15 session on writing ads for podcasts, listen to any podcast by <i>Dr. Laura Call of the Day</i> or <i>My Favorite Murder</i> (or another podcast you are familiar with that has ads read by the host(s) of the podcast). Be prepared to give an example of an ad that was read on the podcast. Make sure you know the correct name of the podcast. Did the ad come at the beginning of</p> | <p>Deliverables: Complementary ads and infographic – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>Writing Salon III: Date/Time TBD</p> |

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| | | the podcast or was it in the middle? | |
| Week 14 Thur., Nov. 25 | Thanksgiving | | |
| Week 15 Thur., Dec. 2 | <p>Advertising: Writing for Podcasts PR and advertising professionals need to be facile in all kinds of communications and podcasting is essential these days. During this class session, we will review tips on effective writing for the ear and listen to examples of ads written for podcasts.</p> <p>What do we want the reader/viewer/listener to DO once they've reviewed the ad? Buy a product? Vote for a candidate? Donate to a cause? During this class session, we will hone in on calls to action.</p> <p>In-class writing: Prepare a 2-minute podcast script with a call to action on a subject to be determined.</p> | <p>Readings: "Whipple" – Ch. 9 - Zen and the Art of Taste-Puft</p> <p>Additional websites with ad copywriting and production tips (optional reading):</p> <p>https://www.wrapbook.com/blog/best-commercials</p> <p>https://dailycommercials.com/the-10-popular-tv-ads-of-2021-so-far/</p> <p>https://nofilmschool.com/free-tv-commercial-script-template</p> <p>https://boords.com/blog/how-to-write-a-tv-commercial-script</p> <p>Homework: Finalize your 2-minute podcast script.</p> <p>Final Project - Proofread and finalize your all elements of your final project.</p> | <p>Deliverables: Your 2-minute podcast script – due Monday by 9 p.m.</p> <p>All final projects are to be submitted to Blackboard by December 7 by 7 p.m. No late submissions will be accepted.</p> |
| <p>Final Exam Period 7-9 p.m. first scheduled class period, December 8-15</p> <p>PR 535 Final Exam Thur., Dec. 9, 7-9 pm</p> | <p>Presentation of Final Projects: You will proudly show your classmates your completed Information Kit. Present an overview of your selected organization/brand, walk us through the contents, describe any challenges you encountered.</p> | | |

Policies and Procedures

The following policies and recommendations are intended to provide guidance to students while also establishing a consistent, campus-wide set of standards for accommodating and responding to some of the common issues that may arise from remote learning.

Class Participation and Attendance in Synchronous Sessions:

In general, students should plan to attend every synchronous (at the same time as everyone else) session for the classes in which they are enrolled unless the class time falls outside of reasonable learning hours in the student's time zone (defined as **7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.** in the student's time zone). Accommodations will be extended to students who are unable to attend class due to class being held outside of the reasonable learning hours. Students who are unable to attend class for other reasons must notify their instructor via email prior to the class. Class sessions are recorded and available through Blackboard. You are responsible for watching the recording of any missed class and keeping up with the "in-class" writing assignments and homework assignments.

Class discussions display the communication skills required for your craft. They also can reveal your curiosity, tenacity and ability to connect with sources to obtain information. It is equally important to respect the class and your fellow students. Cell phone rings, side conversations, noisy wrappers, web surfing and other distractions and interruptions have no place in the classroom.

Ideas are to be treated with respect as well, but criticism plays a crucial role in learning. The craft of writing is made up of revision and rewriting. Constructive comments on your classmates' work are expected. Not only should you not be bothered by critiques from fellow students and the instructor, you should seek out honest reactions to your work. Lastly, this is a graduate-level course and as such, will require you to be engaged and involved in the world around you: read a newspaper; watch actual TV news; be aware of breaking stories and issues; notice billboards and bus boards as you travel around the city.

Camera Policy:

Class dynamics are substantially compromised without the ability to see the students in class. **Students should have their cameras on during synchronous online sessions.** However, some students may face challenging situations, such as internet connectivity, illness, or home environments that make this difficult or impossible. To alleviate these concerns, students can use virtual backgrounds (if their Internet bandwidth can accommodate), which will eliminate most privacy concerns, and earphones or headsets to improve audio quality. Students should notify the instructor if they choose not to have their camera on for a class session.

Recording Online Classes:

For the Fall 2021 semester, USC policy requires that classes conducted online be recorded for asynchronous viewing with transcriptions made available. Recordings ensure that all classes are ADA compliant, and can be freely accessed at all times by students irrespective of the region or

time zone they are studying from. Zoom will automatically record and transcribe class sessions, which are then made available to students and faculty for all classes in Blackboard.

ZOOM “Netiquette” – ONLINE CLASS NORMS:

- Wear appropriate attire when on camera. No pajamas or bathrobes.
- Sit at a desk or table to minimize neck fatigue (“tech neck”) and mimic as much as possible the in-class experience.
- Have a light source in front of you and not behind you.
- Mute your microphone unless you are speaking.
- Enable your video camera (webcam) on your device unless you have spoken to the professor in advance about why you are unable to participate with your camera turned on.
- One 10-minute break will be given once an hour when we are on Zoom.
- Practice chat etiquette and use the raise-hand icon (located when you click on “participants” icon) to get the teacher’s attention.
- While it is expected that students will make every effort to attend class, it is recognized that personal circumstances will arise which preclude attendance. In such circumstances, the student is responsible for obtaining the materials presented in missed classes and for making up missed tests and other assignments. We encourage synchronous Zoom class attendance because it has benefits (e.g., real-time engagement with course content, the instructor, and fellow students; ability to ask for clarification, etc.). Accommodations will be extended to students who are unable to attend class due to class being held outside of the reasonable learning hours (defined as **7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.** in the student’s time zone).

IMPORTANT: If you experience problems logging onto Zoom for the class session, please email me immediately about the problem and then seek technical assistance by contacting the USC tech desk (itservices.usc.edu/contact/) or (213) 740-5555.

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 one percent (1%) 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 class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

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 Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://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."

b. Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.
equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations.
dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students.
diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

About Your Instructor

Lisa Cracchiolo Tush was graduated from USC's School of Journalism with an emphasis in public relations in 1984 and worked in Los Angeles for close to 20 years at four PR agencies: Hill and Knowlton, Burson-Marsteller, Ketchum Public Relations and Ogilvy PR.

Much of her time was spent developing communications elements ranging from media materials to customer newsletters. She worked on numerous accounts including Bridgestone Tires, Epson Computers, Hilton Hotels, Metrolink commuter rail, and Star System ATM network. Additionally, she has experience in media relations and organizing special events.

In 2005, she obtained her teaching credential from Cal State L.A. and transitioned from PR to teaching language arts at the junior high level. She has taught at two LA-area Catholic schools for 10 years focusing on literary analysis and writing instruction.

In addition to occasionally substitute teaching, Lisa volunteers at Cal Poly Pomona where she is an Executive in Residence in the business school. She works with students to prepare them for job interviews. She provides counsel on resumes, letters of recommendation, job selection, and interview skills.

She loves reading, traveling, cooking and watching HGTV. Her current favorite podcasts are *Were you raised by wolves?*, *Southern Living's Biscuits & Jam*, and *My Favorite Murder*. Lisa also has started writing travel articles for Playground-Earth.com.