

## **MCA- 476 PR Writing (3 Credit hrs)**

### **Course Objectives**

1. This course is designed to introduce students to the form, style and technique of public relations writing. The course will provide experiences in the various forms of writing for public relations, including press releases, feature articles, interviews, media memos, public service announcements, backgrounders, position papers, speeches, and persuasive copy structure used in non-profit and corporate brochures, annual reports and newsletters. Class sessions will be a combination of lecture/discussion sessions and writing labs.

The objectives of this course are:

- a. To introduce students to more advanced writing activities and to build on basic writing skills already learned,
- b. To instruct students on how to create a variety of written documents,
- c. To enable students to understand the rhetorical aspects of the public relations writing process, and
- d. To reinforce AP Style.

### **Learning Outcomes**

2. After completion of course, students shall be able to:
  - a. Craft and delivering a PR "message"
  - b. Develop skills for pre-writing, writing, and re-writing, in writing assignments
  - c. Write for different audiences to which PR writing is addressed
  - d. Show familiarity with a range of PR writing tools, sufficient to take part in PR planning at the entry level
  - e. Create a Message Planner to organize their writing
  - f. Write effective press releases, PSAs (public service announcement), pitch letters, feature stories on a short notice.
  - g. Understand the ethical obligations of a professional PR writer

### **3. Contents**

- a. Importance of story in PR writing. analyzing the elements of a news story.
- b. The news angle... the role of the editor... what do editors look for in a story? the press release and media alert format... the use of direct quotes.

- c. The importance of the writing process. outlining, clustering and other ways of organizing information... crafting the message. the importance of revisions and redrafts.
- d. Discovering feature material, placement of ideas... Other uses of PR writing for feature stories. Also, press releases for arts events and similar activities... the relationship of the press release to the press kit, and the press conference.
- e. Memos, pitch letters and confirmation letters. "scripting" the interview... how to meet the media.
- f. Different ways to diversify your style and make your copy more compelling.... different types of press release lead.
- g. Four principal vehicles for broadcast publicity... differences in writing for the ear vs. the eye... basic principles of writing for the ear, and formats for the broadcast release & PSA.
- h. VNRs, film scripts, presentations, visual treatments... how do news outlets use your PR submissions... new technologies in PR.
- i. How public relations professionals are using the Internet... Web-based challenges and opportunities. Writing for Web sites.
- j. Fact-finding, newsgathering, organizing your information... essentials for interviews... research tools.
- k. Public relations writing for internal audiences. Writing backgrounders, position papers and other longer pieces for different publics.
- l. Types of speeches... the mechanics of organization... making brief remarks, presentations, and formal speeches.
- m. Developing the outline of a PR campaign and communicating your ideas to different publics different types of media kit

## **References**

1. Marsh, Charles; W. Guth, David; Poovey Short, Bonnie (2004). *Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising, Sales and Marketing, and Business Communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Allyn & Bacon.
2. Associated Press, (2014). *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*, Forty-sixth Edition, Basic Books.

3. Schenkler, Irv and Herrling, Tony, (2003). *Guide to Media Relations*, Prentice Hall.
4. William Strunk (2012). *The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition*, Start Publishing LLC.
5. Rene J. Cappon, (2005). *Associated Press Guide to Newswriting*. Peterson's.
6. Marsh, Charles, Guth, David W., & Short, Bonnie Poovey. (2012). Writing For the Web. In *Strategic writing: multimedia writing for public relations, advertising, and more* (pp. 16–25). Boston: Pearson.
7. Pelham, Fran. (2000). The triple crown of public relations: Pitch letter, news release, feature article. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 45(1), 38–41.