Public Service Announcement – Group Project

Overview: For this project, you will work in groups of 3 or 4 students to plan, write, produce, and present a Public Service Announcement (PSA). PSAs can appear in multiple media: Television, radio, print, and now the internet. A public service announcement differs from a regular commercial in that its goal is not to sell a product (note that some commercials may use PSA-style formats, but they are not PSAs). The goal of a PSA is to give advice, reminders, or warnings about important issues. Your group will choose a topic related to undergraduate student life at Purdue.

Requirements: In brief, your group will create a video PSA and upload it to Youtube. This video must be 45 - 60 seconds long and address an issue relevant to Purdue undergraduate students. At the end of the semester, all groups will give an in-class presentation of their video.

Despite the genre, this assignment has lots of writing and research attached. Your group will be responsible for writing a group contract, a script, a full storyboard, and a bibliography. You will also, as mentioned above, keep a weekly log of group activities and write a reflection on your individual and group process. While some group members will have their specialties, all students must contribute equally to the project.

Conferences for weeks 13 - 15 will be devoted to PSA groups. Your group will meet with me for 15 minutes each, but I suggest that you use the remaining 35 minutes to meet elsewhere. It may be necessary to schedule additional group meetings, especially for shooting video. Those are your own responsibility.

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop students’ skills in writing for various genres, using technology inside and outside of the classroom, and working as a team. The purpose of your PSA is to educate Purdue students about an important issue that affects their lives.

Audience: Your audience for the PSA is undergraduate students at Purdue University. Your stance should be appropriate to this audience and your purpose.

Genre: The final product will be a video, but you will use others genres throughout the production process. These include: Reports (project log), storyboards, scripts, MLA bibliographies, PowerPoint presentations, and reflections.

Media/Design: Your PSA must be uploaded to Youtube, so you will have to make sure it is a Youtube-compatible filetype. I will not accept emailed video files. A few years ago I would have told you the PSA must be exactly 30, 45, or 60 seconds long, but the growth of online advertising has given us more freedom. Your video must be in the range of approximately 45 - 60 seconds. This is both more and less time than you might think!

Your end-of-semester group presentation must include a PowerPoint, Prezi, or similar.
Process

Important dates:
Thurs., March 28th: Group contract.
Weds./Fri., April 3rd/5th: Annotated bibliography (group), project log 1 (individual).
Weds./Fri., April 10th/12th: Script and storyboard (group), project log 2 (individual).
Weds./Fri., April 17th/19th: Project log 3 (individual).
Thurs., April 18th: Peer review.
Mon., April 22nd: Video due (email me the Youtube link)
Sun., April 28th: Reflection due by email.

Group Contract

In a typed document, provide the following information:

- Group Name
- Tentative PSA Topics: List two or three topics that interest your group.
- Roles and Responsibilities: Outline the major tasks of this assignment and who will be in charge of each part. While all group members must contribute to every area of the project, some of you have skills and talents that the others do not. For example, is one of you a good artist? He/she might want to draw the storyboard images.
- Strengths and Weaknesses: For each group member, list at least one strength and one weakness related to the project.
- Rules of Conduct: In this section, agree on some basic rules and the consequences for breaking them. What will happen if group members miss a meeting or neglect their responsibilities?
- Conflict Resolution: If there is a problem/disagreement in the group, how will you handle it? For those of you in groups of 4, how will you resolve a deadlocked vote? (Hint: The first step is NOT to bring the issue to me. That’s a last resort.)
- Signatures: ALL group members must sign the contract and hand it in to me on Thursday, March 28th.

Project Logs

Due weekly.
In your project logs, keep track of each group meeting for the PSA. The format is up to you, but you should include the following information: When/where you met, who was there, who was absent, what you worked on, what went well/what went wrong, plans (time, location, tasks) for the next group meeting. You do not have to include conferences or in-class work unless you want to. Project logs will be turned in every week at group conferences.

Annotated Bibliography

Due April 3/5
As a group, locate 2 - 3 sources related to your PSA topic. Sources might include: News articles, scholarly articles, interviews with students/faculty/staff, etc. The only restrictions here are no Wikipedia, About.com, etc. Write a brief annotation describing the contents of each source. While this is intended as a “thinking document” to get you started on your topic, please use correct MLA formatting.
Script
Due April 10/12
Did you think scripts were just dialogue? Think again! Yes, your script needs to include any dialogue you’re going to use, but you also need to describe the major actions in every scene. Note the places where you are likely to use music or special effects. You do not have to follow screenplay format standards, though you may certainly do so if you wish. This is the verbal companion to your visual storyboard.

Storyboards
Due April 10/12
Using the storyboard template pages (posted on the course website), plan every shot of the PSA. Draw the main action of the shot, noting approximately how long it will take, and include any dialogue, sound, or special effects required. I will not be judging the storyboards on artistic merit, so don’t worry if none of you can draw more than a stick figure. This is the visual companion to your verbal script.

Video
Due April 22
In a 45 - 60 second (approx.) Public Service Announcement, inform Purdue University undergraduate students about an issue that affects their lives.

Video requirements: Your video must have a title and credits. The credits must list all group members and any people who appeared in or helped with the video. If you use music, it must appear in the credits. If you use music that is not available under Creative Commons, you must also link to the music in your Youtube description or your video may be deleted for copyright infringement. (If Youtube sends you a copyright complaint, don’t try to fight it, even if you followed Fair Use perfectly. You are going to lose that fight because they don’t care. Just take the video down.) If you cite sources in your video, include links to those sources in the video description.

Technical requirements: As outlined above, your video must be viewable on Youtube by midnight of Friday, week 15. You can create a new Youtube account for your group or use a member’s existing account. A word on privacy: If you don’t want your PSA appearing in Youtube searches, you may set it as unlisted. Do not set your video to private because I won’t be able to see it!

Presentation
During week 16, each group will present their video. Presentations should do the following:

- Introduce your group as a whole and each member individually
- Identify the issue your group chose and why you think it is important.
- Share the sources you submitted during week 13 and explain their relevance to the PSA.
- Share a few anecdotes about the production process. Did anything strange or disastrous happen? Did you get arrested?
- Show the PSA video.
• CONCLUDE (this was the area of greatest weakness in the database presentations)

Each presentation must include a PowerPoint-type slide show. Each presentation must be no longer than 12 minutes, including the video. All members of your group must have a role in the presentation. Your audience will fill out comment cards, which I will pass on to your group immediately after class.

Reflection
Due by email no later than April 28th.
In a Word document, reflect on how you think the project went. Answer these questions: How did your group work as a team? How do you feel about your contributions to the project? What went well and what could have been better? Were there any major problems or obstacles you had to overcome as a group? What grade do you think your team has earned and why?