

COM 456: Advertising Writing

Instructor Information
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INTRODUCTION: The primary objective of this course is to provide you with "hands-on" experience of working with "REAL" clients in the "REAL" world. It is run much like a real advertising firm as the situation permits. This course can be one of the most exciting and useful of your undergraduate career, depending upon how much you are willing to invest into it and learn from it. I am looking forward to an exciting and productive semester!

COURSE PHILOSOPHY: This course is driven by the fundamental principle of learning through engagement. Scholars in communication are beginning to recognize the practical role that communication can play in providing solutions to the problems faced by our neighborhoods, communities, and nations, and advertising is at the forefront of this revolution. The knowledge gained by you in communication classrooms can be best imbibed when embodied in action. By working with a non-profit organization and sharing your expertise with them, not only do you gain valuable advertising experience, but you contribute to the growth of the community that has nurtured and nourished you. So take your jobs SERIOUSLY and treat your assignments with respect.

PREREQUISITES: Comm. 256

TEXT: Burton, W. (2004). *Advertising Copywriting*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Business Books. (AC)

Bendinger, B. (2002). *The Copy Workshop Workbook*. Chicago, IL: The Copy Workshop. (CWW)

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION: The assignments and their weights are below.

Participation Tutorials	100
Final (Take-home)	250 pts.
Journal and Participation	100 pts.
Team Grade	550
Proposal	100 pts.
Final Report	250 pts.
Team Performance	200 pts.

Grading: There are 200 points available in the class. A grade is determined by reaching the cut-off point. A=175 (87.5%) B=160 (80%) C=140 (70%) D=120 (60%).

Deductions: As you know, ad work is all about deadlines – no newspaper, magazine, or TV station will hold up its program run for a late ad copy -- so lateness is just not something that the profession tolerates. Therefore, 1) assignments are due at the beginning of class and late assignments will be graded down **twenty percent (20%)** for each regular school day, or portion of a day, they are late. As you also know, much of what we write in advertising actually gets published, so 2) grading standards for spelling, grammar, and general production quality in this class are those of your chosen profession – which means very high.

Individual Performance evaluates each person's individual contribution. The grade is determined mostly by reading your journal and those of the other members of your Team, but also includes observation of how each member works in the Team. The grade is based on: a) how well the assigned Team role is carried out, b) responsibility and cooperation, c) press release packet assignment, d) journal reports, how insightful and substantive these are, and e) individual reports. Note that in extreme cases of poor Team participation, substantiated by journal reports and oral discussions with the instructor, **a Team may "fire" one of its members**. That member may either, a) continue doing a complete project on their own with full credit available, or b) stop working on a project and lose the remaining points. Finally, **you are responsible** for everything covered in class – **or in your Team** – while you are absent. This means, for example, that if you are absent from a Team meeting and your Team has to create a new deadline because of a crisis **you** are responsible for finding out about it and meeting the deadline.

Class Participation Assignments: You will be assigned ten (10) participation assignments throughout the semester.

Final (Take-home): This take-home final will test your ability to compare, analyze, synthesize and apply the content discussed in class.

Team Performance evaluates the total public relations campaign. It is based on: a) the overall content of your project, including writing, creativity, neatness, accuracy, and the like, b) the overall process of the Team, including efficiency, skill and professionalism shown towards the client, instructor, and Team members, c) oral presentations of proposal, and d) final report.

Journal. Each class member keeps a journal and turns it in several times. **Journals are absolutely confidential between the student and the instructor**. The journal allows me to help you in two very important ways. First, I can give advice to individual students privately. Second, I can find out if anyone is being perceived as not doing their part in the Team before it becomes a major problem, for them or for the Team. The journal details: a) your work on the project, including billable hours, b) an analysis of what is going well in the Team and what is not. Journals are graded (plus = good job, check = acceptable, minus = not enough thought or substance) on thoroughness, insight, etc.

Billable Hours. All public relations “consulting,” including internal work in many large companies, is charged on a per-hour basis. Sometimes a per-hour + costs basis. Although we are not paid for them in 353, each journal entry should clearly state your billable hours for any work associated with that entry. Your final report to the client also reflects, a) total billable hours for each person in the Team, b) aggregate billable hours for the whole project. Discuss billable hours with other Team members and be prepared to explain\justify them to each other, to me, and to the client at any time.

Each time you hand in your journal these hours are added up so that you can indicate how many billable hours you have accumulated up to that time. Report this figure clearly in its own box.

One important rule. All work has to be approved by the instructor before it can be submitted to the client. When you arrange a deadline with your client make sure to leave enough time to get it in to me first. I usually need until the next class to get it back to you. If the work needs revision before it can go to the client the revision is due in one week (unless special arrangements are made). The first revision can raise the grade, subsequent revisions cannot raise the grade any further.

Just as you would be watched for leadership or promotion potential in a real workplace, you can help manage this class. Look for opportunities to help make improvements in the class and to make it as enjoyable as possible for everyone. Second, you will have substantial input in evaluating each Team member's performance -- but remember that the members of your Team, your teacher, and your client, are much like yourself. We all have more than our share of problems and pressures. Third, sometimes things that would be a major problem in a permanent job can be compromised, or even ignored, for a few weeks. Try to overlook minor problems or disagreements. In case you cannot, please talk to me!

Class schedule:

Monday, August 22: Introduction to the course—what is advertising? Looking at an Ad;

Wednesday, August 24: How to write Copy?
READING: Chapter 7 CWW; Chapter 1AC

Friday, August 26: Setting Objectives; Objectives Tutorial
READING: Chapter 8 CWW; Chapter 2 IAC; Participation Assignment One (Class)

Monday, August 29: Copywriting Strategy
READING: Chapter 9 CWW

Wednesday, August 31: Copywriting Strategy
READING: Chapter 10 CWW

Friday, September 2: Strategy Tutorial
READING: Chapter 10 CWW; Participation Assignment Two (Class)

Monday, September 5: Holiday

Wednesday, September 7: Incorporating research into Strategy
READING: Chapter 3 IAC

Friday, September 9: Research Driven Copy; Research Tutorial
READING: Chapter 4 IAC; Participation Assignment Three (Class)

Monday, September 12: Headlines
READING: Chapter 6 IAC, Chapter 11 CWW

Wednesday, September 14: Headlines Continued
READING: Chapter 7 IAC, Chapter 12 CWW

Friday, September 16: Headlines Tutorial
READING: Chapter 13; Participation Assignment Four (In class)

Monday, September 19: Body Copy
READING: Chapter 8 IAC

Wednesday, September 21: Body Copy, Part Two
READING: Chapter 8 IAC

Friday, September 23: Body Copy Tutorial
Participation Assignment Five (In class)

Monday, September 26: Print Ads
READING: Chapter 15 CWW

Wednesday, September 28: Radio advertising
READING: Chapter 19 IAC, Chapter 16 CWW

Friday, September 30: Print and Radio Advertising Tutorial
Participation Assignment Six (In class)

Monday, October 3: TV Advertising
READING: Chapter 20 IAC; Chapter 21 CWW

Wednesday, October 5: TV Advertising Continued
READING: Chapter 21 IAC, 22 CWW

Friday, October 7: TV Advertising Tutorial
READING: Chapter 23 CWW; Participation Assignment Seven (In Class)

Monday, October 10: HOLIDAY

Wednesday, October 12: Team Creativity
READING: Chapter 27 CWW

Friday, October 14: Campaign
READINGS: Chapter 28 CWW; Participation Assignment Eight (Home)

Monday, October 17: Campaigns

Wednesday, Campaigns

Friday, October 21: Campaigns
Participation Assignment Nine (Home)

Monday, October 24: Team Work

Wednesday, October 26: Team Work

Friday, October 28: Team Work
Assignment Ten (Home)

Monday, October 31: Integrated Marketing Communication

Wednesday, Team Work

Friday, November 4: Team Work

Monday, November 7: Evaluating Campaigns

Wednesday, November 9: Evaluation

Friday, November 11: Evaluation Tutorial

Monday, November 14: Team Work

Wednesday, November 16: Team Work

Friday, November 18: Team Work

Monday, November 21: Wrapping up
READING: Chapter 26 CWW

Wednesday, November 23- Friday, November 25: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Monday, November 28: Brand Image

Wednesday, November 30: Team Work

Friday, December 2: Prepare for Presentation

Monday, December 5: Class Presentation

Wednesday, December 7: Class Presentation

Friday, December 9: Final exam review; LAST CLASS DAY

Week of December 12--FINAL EXAM

Whitaker, W., Ramsey, J., & Smith, R. (2000). Media Writing. Longman: New York.

Wilcox, D., & Nolte, L. (1997). Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques (3rd ed.).
Longman: New York.
