

**SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**MCOM 3383 03 – WRITING FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVERTISING**  
**CRN 23892**  
**SPRING 2018 | Online**  
**3 credit hrs**

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**PROFESSOR:** Bruce O'Neal, Ph.D. **OFFICE:** DR 310

**OFFICE HOURS:** By Appointment

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**COURSE PREREQUISITES:** MCOM 1332 Writing for Mass Media

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines the process of communicating to persuade and inform. Students learn the techniques of strategic thinking and practice writing for advertising and promotions, news media and special audience materials, including online communications for internal and external audiences.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** To refine writing skills utilized in producing public relations and advertising materials; explore the variety of tactics used in the public relations and advertising fields and how writing techniques vary in their creation; appreciate the role of creative thinking in the writing process; gain insight into the team aspects of preparing written communications materials; provide overall preparation for a career in these fields.

**COURSE METHOD:** Includes lectures, presentations, discussion, individual and group assignments and projects with short- and long-term deadlines.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT:** Attendance, participation, assignments, projects, quizzes.

**ADDITIONAL GRAMMAR ASSESSMENT:** Students must pass a proctored MCOM department grammar test with a score of at least 80% or drop one (1) final letter grade.

**TEXTBOOKS:** Wilcox, *Public Relations Writing & Media Techniques*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., 2015. +

*The Associated Press Stylebook, 2015 edition or later*

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance and participation are mandatory and will count in the final grade. Any absences (including University-authorized) must have documentation to count as excused. Unexcused absences can have a significant negative impact on the attendance grade in this class. Tardiness, unless excused, results in loss of attendance points.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES:** Students should read the current university Catalog and Student Handbook to become familiar with University policies. These policies include but are not limited to classroom conduct, academic integrity, grade appeal, the Americans with Disabilities Act, sexual harassment, student access to records, and others; policies specified in the current catalog are applicable unless otherwise stated in this syllabus.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT POLICY:** SHSU policy holds that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs, nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should visit the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. Then they can make arrangements with the instructor to consider appropriate strategies and develop helpful procedures that ensure participation and achievement opportunities without impairment.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** All students should engage in all academic pursuits in a manner above reproach and maintain complete honesty and integrity in academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** Sec. 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an

institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including exams, for the observance of a religious holy day (including travel for that purpose). A student with an absence excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to make up the excused exam or assignment within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion with places of worship exempt from property taxation under Sec. 11.20 of the Texas Tax code.

**WRITING CENTER:** Students may opt to visit the Sam Houston Writing Center, located in Farrington 111 (294-3680) to work with writing tutors on various stages of the writing process. [shsu.edu/~wctr](http://shsu.edu/~wctr)

**VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:** Allowing any visitor – meaning any person not enrolled in this section, whether current SHSU student or other -- to enter or remain in the classroom during the class period is entirely at the instructor's discretion.

**CLASSROOM CODE OF CONDUCT:** The SHSU Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is available at [shsu.edu/dept/student-activities/policies.html](http://shsu.edu/dept/student-activities/policies.html)

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:** Near the end of the semester, students will have the opportunity to complete an SHSU course/instructor evaluation form.

- **Preparation of Work:** Students must type assignments. Unless specifically allowed, handwritten work is unacceptable. Grading criteria includes accuracy, spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as adherence to specific guidelines provided for the assignment.
- **Submission of Work:** Students must turn in work **before** deadlines (date and time due) in the manner specified (e.g., electronically). Missing class for any reason does not extend deadlines. **LATE WORK will receive zero credit.**  
**Emailed assignments will not be accepted.**
- **Make-up Work:** Students may not make up a quiz or missed assignment for any reason. **All work missed due will count for zero credit.**
- **Blackboard:** Students should check Blackboard, in addition to SHSU e-mail, between class meetings for announcements and information regarding this class.

- **Email:** Students should use their SHSU.edu email accounts when using email to communicate with the instructor.
- **Virtual Assignments:** Midterm and Final presentations will be conducted via Skype or FaceTime. Please make sure to have those applications re-installed on your laptop, tablet, or mobile phones AND have an account set up for access BEFORE midterms or final exams.

### EVALUATION & GRADING:

1) One (1) personal profile assignment	5%	<b>FINAL CLASS GRADE*:</b>	
2) Mid-semester presentation (virtual)	20%	90% and above	= A
3) Discussions	25%	80% - 89%	= B
4) Assignments	25%	70% - 79%	= C
5) Final project (virtual)	25%	60% - 69%	= D
		Below 60%	= F

**NOTE grading:** I typically do not assign extra-credit. Additionally, please note that I do not round-up any scores including the final class grade.

**NOTE re syllabus:** The intention of course syllabi are to provide students with basic information about the course. The students should view the syllabus as a "blueprint" for the course. The instructor will inform the students of revisions or updates necessary throughout the semester usually via Blackboard and/or University email. Detailed course information, including assignments and due dates will be posted online inside of Blackboard.