Professor Information

Professor: Bailey Thompson, Ph.D.
Email: thompsonba@sfasu.edu
Office: Boynton 201
Office Hours: T/Th: 8-9:30am; 3:15-4:15pm

Course Meeting Days and Times

Class Location: Boynton 209
Class Times M/W 1:00-2:15pm

Text and Materials


Course Description

Fundamentals of writing for publications, including newsletters, house journals, news releases, pamphlets and brochures.

Course Contact Hours and Study Hours

MCOM 3381, "Public Relations Writing" (3 credits), typically meets 2 times a week a 75-minute segments for 15 weeks. Students have weekly chapter quizzes, 9 writing assignments, and a final portfolio. These assignments average a minimum of 6 hours each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

PLOs and SLOs

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate the ability to write effectively across a variety of platforms appropriate to the discipline.
2. Gather, analyze, organize and synthesize discipline-appropriate research and communication information about it.
3. Understand the role of public relations and media in society.
4. Comprehend the legal and ethical principles relating to public relations.
5. Demonstrate the application of media technology, terminology and techniques.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Understand how to define various audiences and segment audiences according to their needs, interests, preferences and demographics.
2. Show proficiency in writing and designing public relations copy for a variety of media, publics and context.
3. Demonstrate skills in writing copy on long and short deadlines and within space requirements.
4. Demonstrate skills in copy revision and proofreading.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of Associated Press style requirements.
6. Demonstrate competence in writing for each stage of the public relations process.

SFA Policies

Academic Integrity (4.I)

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been
administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
[www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dosi@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:
- Health Services
- Counseling Services
• Student Outreach and Support
• Food Pantry
• Wellness Coaching
• Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
• Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
• National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
• Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
• johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Bailey’s Policies

I adhere to 11 general policies in all of my courses:

1. **No late work accepted:** I do not accept late work or late exams, quizzes, assignments, etc. Do not email me to ask for extensions on late work, making up missed classwork etc.

2. **No extra credit:** I do not provide extra credit on an individual basis. Any extra credit provided will be at my discretion and will be extended to the entire class.

3. **24/7 rule:** Your grades are just that- your grades. Not mine. If you have questions about a grade you earned on an assignment, I urge you to contact me about it (via email) to set up an appointment to come in and talk about it. I want you to know what you did wrong, and what you did right. However, please observe the 24/7 policy- take 24 hours after receiving a grade to cool off, try to understand your mistakes, and then shoot me an email. You will also have 7 days after a grade is posted to contact me to discuss or dispute it. After those 7 days, all grades will stand as is.

4. **No D2L emails:** Contact me via SFA email, not D2L email. My email address is thompsonba@sfasu.edu

5. **No doctor’s notes please:** I do not accept, want or need doctor’s notes for missed classes or assignments- your medical information is yours and is private. If you have an extended absence for hospitalization, etc. please go through the proper channels at the rights and responsibilities office.

6. **There are some emails I will not respond to:** I will not respond to any emails asking the following questions or making the following requests: 1) emails asking for grade changes 2) emails asking for final grades to be rounded up 3) emails asking for extensions on assignments with no hospitalization or extreme circumstance 4) emails asking for extra credit- any extra credit given by me will be given to all students and advertised in class or on D2L, not on an individual basis via email. – Essentially, emails asking me to show favor grade-wise to one student in a course in order over other students will not be returned. This is the primary way I will be working to ensure that all students have the same opportunities in my courses.

7. **Final grade rounding policy:** I will round final grades with a .5 or higher. I will not raise final grades with a .4 or lower for any reason. I will also not round “9” grades. Therefore, if you make an 89 in the class, do not email me asking if I will bump in to a 90. Unless you make an 89.5 or higher, I will not round.

8. **Grading Turnaround Time:** my turnaround time for grading assignments varies by the assignment type. For multiple choice quizzes or exams the turnaround time is approximately 48 hours. For substantial written assignments it is 2 weeks.

9. **Email Turnaround Time:** I do not answer emails after 5pm or before 8am Monday-Friday. If you email after those hours expect a reply within 48 hours. I also do not respond to emails on the weekends. I encourage each of you to set healthy boundaries when it comes to your own work-life balance.

10. **Emails + Grades:** I will only discuss grade issues/dispute via email in writing. This is to ensure a paper trail for both the student and myself.

11. **A is for Awesome:** Every student should not expect an A in my course. A is for exceptional work. B is for good work. C is for average work. A work goes above and beyond the requirements and shows true mastery of the content. A work impresses.

**PR Writing-Specific Policies**

1. **Writing Days:** You are expected to be in class on writing days. This is your opportunity to not only use class time to write your pieces for your Media Kit, but also receive feedback, ask questions, and bounce ideas off of your peers as well as myself. Failure to regularly attend writing days will result in up to a grade letter reduction on your final media kit grade.

2. **Work Week:** The last week of regular classes (Monday Dec. 4 and Wednesday Dec. 6) are designated work days to put together your media kit. During this week I will NOT give substantive feedback on any writing assignment- that time has passed. I will however, help troubleshoot any formatting, technology, etc. issues you might have. If you turn your media kit in early you will not be required to attend work week. However, if you have not turned in your media kit, you are expected to be in attendance until you do so.
Attendance Policy

I do not “take attendance” daily and attendance does not constitute a separate portion of your overall final grade.

However, regular attendance is necessary for success in this course. Additionally, students have 14 quizzes over the course of the semester, typically on Mondays, where makeups are not given for any reason.

Students also need to make sure they’re familiarized with the Writing Days policy above stating: “failure to regularly attend writing days will result in up to a grade letter reduction on your final media kit grade.”

Grading Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (14 @ 3% each)</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Media Kit</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Requirements (Assignments)

*Quizzes*

There will be 14 quizzes during the course of the semester. Each quiz is worth 3% of your final grade.

All quizzes will be given in class, starting at 1pm. You will have 10 minutes to complete your quiz. If you arrive late, you will not receive extra time, as I will take up all quizzes at 1:10 so that we may begin discussion on time.

No makeups on quizzes for any reason. I will, however, replace your lowest 2 quiz grade with a 100.

*Media Kit*

You will submit a final portfolio of all 11 writing pieces, which will account for 58% of your final grade (each piece will be worth approximately 5% each). Details on organization and presentation of the portfolio will be provided. Your media kit is due no later than 1pm on Wednesday, December 13- however, you may turn your media kit in early if you wish.
Weekly Calendar

I reserve the right to make changes to the calendar at any time. Should I make changes, it is my responsibility as the professor to inform the students. Changes will be posted on D2L. The following calendar is an approximation of our schedule this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Quiz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Syllabus + Course Info</td>
<td>READ YOUR SYLLABUS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Nonprofit Selection Day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Learning about Nonprofits</td>
<td>*D2L</td>
<td>Quiz #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Strategic Writing</td>
<td>1A, 1B, 1C, 1H, 1K</td>
<td>Quiz #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>AP Style</td>
<td>1C + *D2L</td>
<td>Quiz #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Media Kits Overview</td>
<td>2O + *D2L</td>
<td>Quiz #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Announcement News Release</td>
<td>2G + 2H</td>
<td>Quiz #5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Media Advisory</td>
<td>2L</td>
<td>Quiz #6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Backgrounder</td>
<td>2P</td>
<td>Quiz #7</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Fact Sheets + FAQs</td>
<td>2Q + D2L*</td>
<td>Quiz #8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pitches</td>
<td>2M</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Fundraising Letters + E-Blasts</td>
<td>4G</td>
<td>Quiz #10</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Radio/TV PSA</td>
<td>3I</td>
<td>Quiz #11</td>
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<td>W</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Infographics</td>
<td>*D2L</td>
<td>Quiz #12</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Writing for Social Media</td>
<td>*D2L</td>
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<td>Nov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Branding Quick Sheet</td>
<td>*D2L</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>Dec.</td>
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<td>Work Week</td>
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<td>W</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Final exam time: 1-3pm- Media Kit due BY 1PM</strong></td>
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MCOM 3381: PR Writing
Fall 2023