



Reinhardt University
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Communication and Media Studies Program

COM-340: Strategic Writing

TR 8:00-9:15 AM, FPAC 176

Instructor	Dr. Efe Sevin
Office Location	FPAC – 180
Office Hours	T 11-1, W 12-1, R 11-1, or by appointment
Email	ehs@reinhardt.edu
Twitter	@efesevin

Course Description: *Why do we need a 15-week course to write a 140-character tweet?*

Indeed, we are living in an era where most communication takes places digitally – and uses a variety of media types. This course will not praise the importance or argue for the relevance of written communication. Rather, throughout the semester, we will focus on how multimedia writing strategies. We will start with the fundamentals of writing, and explore how these writing strategies can inform our production skills on a variety of platforms. Through in-class workshops, and assignments, you will create a professional writing portfolio.

Required Material: Marsh, C., Guth, D., & Short, B. P. (2012). *Strategic writing: multimedia writing for public relations, advertising, and more* (3rd ed). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Please note that I will be using the 3rd edition of the book. All the chapter and page numbers refer to the 3rd edition. We will not be using “MySearchLab” component. You can purchase your copy through Reinhardt Bookstore or your preferred bookstore.

Communication Program Objectives (CPO)

Communication students will:

- 1) develop and enrich their critical thinking skills and communication skills
- 2) demonstrate creativity and a variety of research methods in their communication classes and civic work
- 3) use technology to enhance communication projects and course assignments
- 4) demonstrate respect for individual and cultural differences
- 5) demonstrate understanding of the historical, informational and organizational aspects of the communication environment

Learning outcomes and course objectives: All of the course assignments and learning activities such as writing projects, research assignments, multimedia projects, readings, lectures, class discussions, and examinations are designed to establish a better understanding of the communication environment for students. After completing the course:

- 1) Students will have a better understanding of the content, organization, format and design of standard strategic communication messages and documents (CPO 1, 5),
- 2) Students will improve the quality of student writing, including adherence to strategy, audience, organization, and grammar (CPO 1, 4),
- 3) Students will strengthen their critical and creative thinking abilities (CPO 1),
- 4) Students will build a professional portfolio (CPO 1, 2, 3).

Assignments

Assignments	Grades
Portfolio Assignments	50%
Job Market Preparation	10%
Short Answer Quizzes	25%
Twitter Assignment	10%
Class Participation	5%

Portfolio Assignment (50%): Your portfolio assignment is composed of writing and production samples. It has five components, each worth 10% of your final grade. You will start each portfolio component in class during our workshops and will have until Sunday to finalize your work.

Portfolio Part 1: Media Kit (Due on 9/17, 11:59 PM).

Portfolio Part 2: Traditional Writing Samples (Due on 10/1, 11:59 PM).

Portfolio Part 3*: Digital Writing Samples (Due on 10/22, 11:59 PM).

Portfolio Part 4: Production (Due on 11/5, 11:59 PM)

Portfolio Part 5: Final Submission and Presentation (Week 15)

* For Digital Writing Samples component, you will be required to start a blog and write at least two blog posts.

Job Market Preparation (10%): You will create a resume and a cover letter (Due on 11/19, 11:59 PM).

Short Answer Quizzes (25%): All quizzes will be made available one week before the deadline and will be due before the class time. They will have three to five short answer questions.

- Weekly Test 1, opens on 8/31, 8:00 am, due on 9/7 8:00 am
- Weekly Test 2, opens on 9/14, 8:00 am, due on 9/21 8:00 am
- Weekly Test 3, opens on 9/28, 8:00 am, due on 10/05 8:00 am
- Weekly Test 4, opens on 10/19, 8:00 am, due on 10/26 8:00 am
- Weekly Test 5, opens on 11/14, 8:00 am, due on 11/21 8:00 am

Twitter Assignment (10%): In order to establish a professional social media presence, you will start a Twitter account (or keep using if you already have one), follow 20 individuals / organizations that are relevant to our course topic, and interact with at least two of their tweets. You will submit a screenshot of your Twitter page, the list of 20 accounts you followed, and screenshots of the two tweets. (Due on 11/28, 8:00 am).

Class participation (5%): You will be graded on your attendance and participation in class discussions.

General Guidelines:

- Absolutely no submissions. Do not forget the “due dates” on the syllabus are deadlines. You can submit your papers before the deadline. Please be prepared for computer crashes, file corruptions, sicknesses, family emergencies, etc. and do not wait until the deadline to submit your work.
- All assignments should be submitted via EagleWeb.
- All papers should include a title as well as date, course number, and your name at the top of the first page.
- The only accepted file extensions are doc, docx, and pdf.
- The files should be named YourLastName_CourseCode_AssignmentName (e.g. McDonald_COM340_PortfolioPart1.docx)
- All papers should be proofread for spelling and grammatical errors.
- All papers should be formatted Times New Roman, font size 12, double-spaced.
- One page roughly means 250 words.
- Further information about the assignments and grading will be given during our classes and via EagleWeb.

Weekly Schedule

A note about your readings: You have a unique textbook for this course. The subject-matter of our course, writing, thrives on practice. You can improve your writing skills only through writing and reading more. Your textbook includes short explanations of different products and a few examples. While reading for this course, you should dissect the examples provided. Do not simply go through the pages. Once you see an example, go back, and see how the example implements good writing tips and strategies.

I recommend you to look for further examples. Depending on our subject, you can find several examples through an easy web search, or through a search on specialized platforms (For Podcasts, use iTunes or your preferred Podcast player. For Advertising material, visit American Marketing Association's Advertising Archive. For PR material, visit PRNewsWire.com).

Schedule

**** As the instructor, I reserve the right to modify this syllabus throughout the semester if necessary. ****

Week	Date	Readings and In-Class Activities	Assignments
Introduction			
Week 1	8/22	Course and Syllabus Review	- Set up a Twitter account
	8/24	Blogging Setup: - Read: http://www.wpbeginner.com/beginners-guide/how-to-choose-the-best-blogging-platform/ - https://www.mediaplatform.com/2016/09/10-corporate-communication-blogs/	- Blog Post #1
Week 2	8/29	Introduction to Strategic Writing Read: Textbook, pp 1-39	
	8/31	Blogs: pp. 109-111	
Week 3	9/5	Strategic Writing in PR Read: Textbook, pp. 41-75, 87-104, focus on pp. 41-42	
	9/7	Media Kit pp. 76-88	- Weekly Test 1
Week 4	9/12	Media Kit Workshop	
	9/14	Media Kit Workshop	Portfolio 1: Media Kit
Week 5	9/19	News Releases Read: Textbook, pp. 43-61	
	9/21	News Releases Read: Textbook, pp. 62-70	- Weekly Test 2
Week 6	9/26	Newsletters, Stories, Speeches Read: Textbook, pp.87-94; 99-104	
	9/28	Traditional Writing Workshop	Portfolio 2: Traditional
Week 7	10/3	Strategic Writing in Advertising Read: Textbook, pp. 119-120	
	10/5	TV and Radio Advertisements Read: Textbook, pp.139-150	- Weekly Test 3
Week 8	10/10	Digital advertisements Read: Textbook, pp. 150-164	

	10/12	Fall Break	
Week 9	10/17	Digital Writing for PR Read: Textbook, pp. 105-111, 115-118	
	10/19	Social Media and Digital Writing Workshop Read: https://www.hubspot.com/inbound-marketing Read: https://conversationprism.com	Portfolio 3: Digital
Week 10	10/24	Production: Podcasts	
	10/26	Production: Podcasts	- Weekly Test 4
Week 11	10/31	Production: Audio/Visual	
	11/2	Production: Audio/Visual	Portfolio 4: Production
Week 12	11/7	Job Market Writing Read: Textbook pp.213-224	
	11/9	Resume and Cover Letter workshop	
Week 13	11/14	Individual Appointments on Portfolios	
	11/16	Individual Appointments on Portfolios	Job Market Preparation Due
Week 14	11/21	Business writing: Read: Textbook, pp. 225-230 - https://www.inc.com/guides/2010/06/email-etiquette.html	- Weekly Test 5
	11/23	Thanksgiving	
Week 15	11/28	Portfolio presentations	Twitter Assignment Due
	11/30	Portfolio presentations	

Classroom Policies

Professionalism: The classroom is at the heart of higher education experience and should be seen as a formal setting of interaction between students and faculty. You are expected to be professional, and courteous at all times. You should not engage in any behavior that might disrupt your professor or your classmates.

Examples of such behavior include arriving late, departing early, interrupting speakers, and using electronic devices for non-class purposes. If you need to arrive late or leave early or you need to be online / have your phone on for any reason, **please consult with me before the class starts.**

Readings / Flipped Classroom: You are expected to read all the assigned readings, including the syllabus. You might be required and/or expected to refer to all the materials assigned, even if we did not discuss them in class. Our classroom type will be devoted to exercises, discussions, and projects that assume you have completed your readings and other assigned exercises **before coming to the lecture.**

Academic Integrity: Familiarize yourself with Reinhardt University's policies on academic dishonesty which can be found in the Student Handbook. There will be zero tolerance to integrity code violations, including cases of plagiarism. If you have any questions about plagiarism or citations, consult the APA style guide (<http://www.apastyle.org/>) or your instructor before you submit your assignments.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes. Please be present in the classroom before the lecture starts. Two missed classes (or four late arrivals or a combination) will result in lower participation grades. Although it is not required, most students send their instructor a brief e-mail to explain their absence in advance.

Participation: In class discussions, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Rather, we seek thoughtful contributions. You will be evaluated on the quality (not quantity, but quality) of your insights. A high "quality" insight offers a different yet relevant point of view, is open to criticism, and moves the class discussion forward. If you find it uncomfortable to speak up in class, please arrange a meeting with your instructor.

Support for Academic Success: Please note that Reinhardt University provides tutoring support for its students through The Center for Student Success (CSS). CSS is located in room 35 of the George M. Lawson Academic Center. Whether those tools involve professional guidance on resume and cover letter writing, interviewing or help in organizing papers, budgeting time, and studying skills, the center operates free of charge to all Reinhardt University students.

Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters.