Course Syllabus

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COM 356 Executive Speechwriting
School of Communication
Illinois State University
Spring 2026

Class Meetings: T&T 2-3:15 p.m. in Fell 162
Lead Student: Peter M. Smudde, Ph.D., APR
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Office Hours: MW 1-3 p.m.; TT 11-1:30 p.m.; and by appointment
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1.0 Course Description

Principles and process for researching, and ghostwriting speeches. Includes strategies for public speaking opportunities and counseling speakers. Course Prerequisites: COM 111 or consent of instructor.
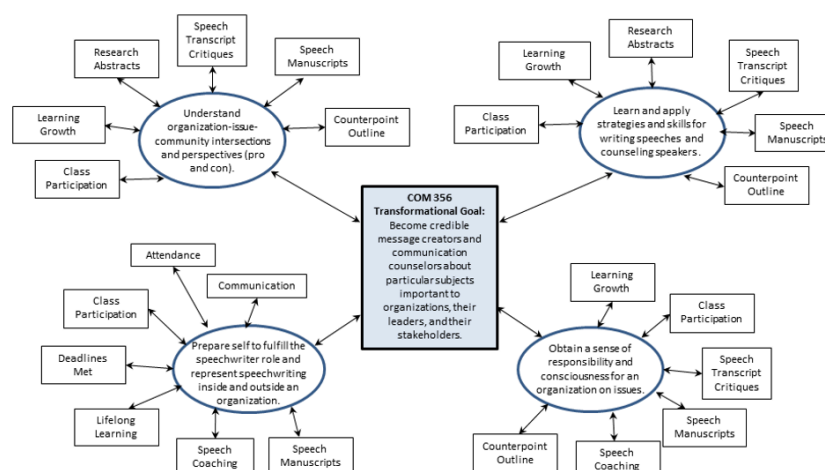
2.0 Detailed Description

Speechwriting is a vital skill among professional communicators—primarily public relations professionals—as organizational leaders increasingly lean on writers to help them craft messages that address issues that matter to *both* the organization and its publics. Simply put, COM 356 concerns the principles, process, and products of ghostwriting speeches for organizational leaders. The course's focus on ghostwriting speeches for organizational leaders emphasizes the students' role as both message creator and communication counselor about the subject matter. Students, then, become more aware and active citizens, which in turn prepares them to be leaders on socially important matters.

Please read **My Teaching Philosophy 11-2021.pdf (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6977926?wrap=1)** ⬇ **(https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6977926/download?download_frd=1)** 📄**https://docreader.readspeaker.com/docreader/? cid=14039&lang=en_us&url=https%3A%2F%2Finst-fs-pdx-prod.inscloudgate.net%2Ffiles%2F86a3d06c-3dfb-407e-9dec-4976fe578e0a%2FMy%2520Teaching%2520Philosophy%252011-2021.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiQiOjE3NjgyOTA5OTQsInVzZXJfaWQiOm51bGwsInJlc291cmNlIjoiL2ZpbGVzLzg2YTNkMf 🔊 Tcu9ALQw)**   for details about my approach to my work as an educator. **(https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6977926?wrap=1)**

3.0 Course Objectives

My vision for this class is for students to appreciate speechwriting for organizational leaders as an important and necessary skill for professional communicators, potentially even as a career. The following graphic shows how we will realize this vision by focusing on a "transformational goal" that is supported by four objectives toward which assignments build your learning.

4.0 Civic Engagement

The course's focus on ghostwriting speeches for organizational leaders emphasizes the students' role as both message creators and communication counselors about a given subject. Specifically in terms of civic engagement, COM 356 addresses speechwriting along three avenues leading to sound citizenship at the individual and organizational levels:

1. Writing speeches involves the process of the writer seeing him-/herself, the executive for whom a speech is written, and the organization as citizens participating in the larger community where a diversity of issues, ideas, and identities are engaged with one another.
2. Speech counseling involves the writer in the role of counselor as he or she guides executives in their thinking about issues and their explication of those thoughts that reflect the interdependence of all stakeholders.
3. Speechwriting naturally demands that writers be critical thinkers about social issues and the contribution of speeches in the democratic conversations about them, especially as those conversations focus on solutions to significant social problems.

5.0 Continued Enrollment

Your enrollment in this class constitutes agreement with all aspects of this syllabus, the supporting "Course Policies" document, and any additions or alterations that may be made to them during the course of the semester. Additions include announcements I post for the class in Canvas or make in class, and additions include e-mail sent to class members. Such additions include information about the course, assignments, and so on. These announcements and e-mail are equally important when it comes to evaluating your work, because announcements may contain clarifications or other help that fit within assignments' requirements.

6.0 Required Texts

- Perlman, A. M. (1997). *Writing Great Speeches: Professional Techniques You Can Use*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Additional assigned readings are listed in Section 25.0, shown in Section 12.0 when they are due, and are available on Canvas.

7.0 Highly Recommended Texts

- American Psychological Association. (2024). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed. Washington, DC: Author.
- Associated Press. (2020). *The Associated Press stylebook:2020-2022* (55th). New York: Author. [Also available as an iPhone/iPad app.]

8.0 Outside Preparation

Plan on spending between six to nine hours (or more, depending on how you learn) each week outside of class on your work for this course. (See ISU's **Credit Hour Policy 4.1.19 (http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/academic/4-1-19.shtml)**. Also see **"Time Management/Credit Hour Policy" (http://ctlt.illinoisstate.edu/pedagogy/onlinecourses/skills/)** for weekly and daily breakdown.) You will need this time to complete assigned readings, prepare for class, write papers, develop team projects, and study for exams. You are expected to read, think critically about, and prepare three to five comments or questions about the material before coming to each class meeting.

9.0 Learning Assessments

Assessment of students' learning against the course's objectives shall be done through the following combination of learning assessments:

9.1 Informal/Ungraded Assessments

I can measure how well you are learning *in process* by observing, listening to and talking with you. These data reveal your personal processes, attitudes, and other matters that are part of how and how well you learn. Examples include chatting about course material before class, the tenor of class meetings, productivity of lab sessions, learning ownership, assignment discussion, visits and conversations with me, and attitude.

9.2 Formal/Graded Assessments

I can measure how well you can apply your learning by evaluating the *work you produce* in response to specific assignments. This work is what is graded and used to determine your final, overall level of mastery of the course's material by course's end. *All written work must conform to AP style and apply APA style for sources.* The writing assignments and their evaluation rubrics, which include intercultural PR matters, will be presented separately in class and available on Canvas, and then graded individually. There are 20 formal, written assessments of your learning in this course. Class participation regarding the discussion of weekly assigned readings also will be tracked for the instructor's use (see separate file on this matter). All assignments require you to apply concepts, principles, models, and practices presented in in the course. The assignments are listed in Section 10.0 with the available points, and the timing of all assignments is given in the "Course Schedule."

10.0 Course Grading Policy

Final grades are assigned on the basis of accumulation of points compared to the set scale below, not percentages. I do not "curve" grades on any assignment or exam, nor do I "curve" final course grades. I evaluate the end products of your work, not effort. Students are encouraged to keep track of the points they have accumulated, and your grades will be posted on Canvas so you can monitor your performance, which I encourage you to do frequently. If I make an error in grading, I'll always apologize and make things right. Here is a breakdown of the point values for the assignments in this course:

Assignments	Available Points	Earned Points
Principal Backgrounder	80	

Speech transcripts critiques:

Critique 1	30
Critique 2	30
Critique 3	40
Critique 4	35
Special occasion speech #1	50

Informative speech:

Critique informative speech	25
Peer edit informative speech	20
Informative speech MS	200
Counterpoint outline (writer & editor)	70

Persuasive speech:

Critique persuasive speech	25
Peer edit persuasive speech	20
Persuasive speech MS	200

Special occasion speech #2:

Critique special occasion speech #2	25
Special occasion speech #2 MS	100

Speech coaching exercise:

Speaker's delivery	75
Peer evaluation	25
Grand Total	**1050**

I will reveal scores in the Canvas grade book only after I return the graded assignments. If you disagree with my evaluation of your work, please see me during office hours within a week after I have returned your work. I will not discuss grades at any other time. I do not "round up" or "round down" points toward final course grades, except in cases for fractions of points, and at that rate I use conventional rounding procedures, e.g. 839.5 could be rounded to 840, but 839.3 would be rounded to 839. The following scale will be used to determine final grades:

A = 1050-956
B = 955-851
C = 850-746
D = 745-641
F = 640-0

Note that the lowest "A" was calculated at 91%, the lowest "B" at 81%, and so on. I reserve the right to revise all or part of this grading curve, which would be announced in class. You are responsible for obtaining any such revisions.

11.0 Student Access & Accommodations

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 308 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit Student Access and Accommodation Service online at **https://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/index.php (https://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/index.php)** .

12.0 Course Schedule

We may alter this course schedule and other aspects of this syllabus as the course progresses. You are responsible for noting any such changes, which will be announced in class and/or posted on Canvas.

(MS = manuscript) (C=Canvas)

Date	Topic/Activity	Writing Assignments Given	
1/13	Course introduction. Learning to learn.		Get books, visit C, & print syllabus
1/15	The speech writing process & basic argument structure	Client backgrounder.	**Schweppe (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935918?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/cou 9790a17ea1fa%2FSchweppe.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODQ3OTEsI (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935915?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi **advice.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMDM3ODgsInVzZXJfaWQiOm51bC (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935919?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi **ethics.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMTQ0NjQsInVzZXJfaWQiOm51bGv**
1/20 🔊	Research, community relations, & coorientation of meaning (enabling "organizational self-efficacy")		Ch. 5. **Hamm (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935912?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/c 75d898975d3a%2FHamm.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODUxNjcsInvzZ ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935926/download?download_frd=1) **https://docreader.readspeal CommunityRels.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODQ2MTgsInVzZXJfaWC (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935925?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi **1c57e1820d5d%2FBronn2000_CoorientationModel.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQ**
1/22	Research for speech writers	Library tour: Milner 213C	
1/27	Language & style	Critique 1	Ch. 1. **Lukaszewski (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935914?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstat **%2520secrets.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMTA0MDcsInVzZXJfaWQiC (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935930?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi **%2520Putting%2520Words%2520in%2520Boss%2527%2520Mouth.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzU 9kTS_HazKOIKB2QbSPezZd2q7r2pwudWsOufW4HErnQ)** , [C]. **Client backgrounder.**
1/29	Language & style		**Smith (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935936?wrap=1)** ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/ **Attention%2520thru%2520language.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMDI5**
2/3	Language & style	Critique 2	Ch. 4 & 9. **Critique 1**
2/5	Language & style	Critique 3	Ch. 7-8.
2/10	Audience analysis & Design Guide	Special occasion speech #1	Ch. 6. **Critique 2**
2/12	Critique special occasion speeches		Special occasion speech outline/draft MS

Date	Topic		Assignment
2/17	Writing time: Spec. Occ. Sp.		
2/19	Writing informative speeches	Informative speech	"**Propositions** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6940531?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/ 6deee6bf707f%2FPropositions.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODkzODk**
2/24	Using support material	Critique 4	**Special occasion speech #1 final MS**
2/26	Writing time: Info Sp.		
3/3	Editing speeches		**Starks** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935920?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses editing.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODQzOTEsInVzZXJfaWQiOm51b((https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6940532?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi 2b6f217b36b9%2F19%2520Tips%2520for%2520Editing%2520Speeches.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJ Cy14oCvGgNJGu-yQ) ." [C]
3/5	Research/Critique informative speeches	*Meet in library (1st floor)*	**Critique 4.** Info. speech outline/draft MS
3/17	Research/Critique informative speeches	*Meet in library (1st floor)*	Info. speech outline/draft MS
3/19 🔊	Peer edit informative speech	BSC Starbucks	Info. speech outline/draft MS
3/24	Discuss info speech individually		Info speech draft MS
3/26	Writing persuasive speeches	Persuasive speech Counterpoint Outline	**Weissman** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935922?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/cou 83c8e1dde5af%2FWeissman%2520~%2520persuasion.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpY "**Propositions** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6940531?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/ 6deee6bf707f%2FPropositions.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyOTQ1OTY
3/31	Using humor in speeches "Merchandising" speeches Counterpoint outline		**Finerman** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935932?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/cour %2520Humor.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMjQzOTIsInVzZXJfaWQiOm (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935929?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/fi humor.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMDI0MjEsInVzZXJfaWQiOm51bGw
4/2	Writing time: Pers. Sp.		Cournterpoint outline peer reviews
4/7	Research/Critique persuasive speeches	*Meet in library (1st floor)*	Persuasive speech outline/draft MS

| 4/9 | Research/Critique persuasive speeches | *Meet in library (1st floor)* | Persuasive speech outline/draft MS |

| 4/14 | Peer edit persuasive speeches | BSC Starbucks | Persuasive speech draft MS |

| 4/16 | Writing different special-occasion speeches. Briefing books/files. | Special occasion speech #2. Speech coaching. | **Persuasive speech final MS** |

| 4/21 | Research/Critique special occasion speeches | *Meet in library (1st floor)* | Special occasion speech outline/draft MS |

| 4/23 | Research/Critique special occasion speeches | *Meet in library (1st floor)* | Special occasion speech draft MS |

| 4/28 | Coaching & delivery (example coaching session) | Coaching exercise | **Lukaszewski** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935914?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/c%2520secrets.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyOTA4ODYsInVzZXJfaWQiC **Anderson** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935924?wrap=1) ↓ (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/cour HowToGiveKillerPresentations.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgzMDQyMDY hBKQK9uK53rhGHDytnqA) [C]. **Toogood** (https://canvas.illinoisstate.edu/courses/44615/files/6935921?wrap=1) ↓ (h %2520delivery.pdf%3Ftoken%3DeyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJpYXQiOjE3NjgyODU1OTcsInVzZXJfaWQiC **occasion speech #2 final MS** |

| 4/30 | Coaching & delivery team meetings | | |

| 5/5 | Speech coaching | | **Deliver speeches for coaching exercise** |

| 5/7 | Speech coaching | | **Deliver speeches for coaching exercise** |

5/   Final exam period (KEEP THIS DATE ON YOUR SCHEDULE IN CASE WE NEED TO USE THIS DAY)

Course Policies

In all my courses I challenge students to *strive for perfection* (or at least near perfection) in their work. Why? The answer is that your bosses, peers and, especially, clients will expect that from you throughout your career. So this course, like the others you've taken, is designed to extend your knowledge, strengthen your analytical skills, and refine your work habits. This course, then, challenges you to think, work and produce discourse that would approximate that of full-time professionals. To manage matters in this course, there are several policy areas given below.

13.0 Class Civility

The following 11 points are habits that, should you choose to employ them, can help you become successful in this course and contribute to a great learning environment for all of us. You also are expected to be familiar with **ISU's Code of Student Conduct** (https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/code/). The 11 points below are not individually or collectively any kind of guarantee about grades you may earn for the course. They make up a prescription for you to effectively manage your work and learn the material in this course.

1. Read, take notes on, develop comments and questions about, and seriously think about the assigned readings before coming to class.

2. Complete assignments/activities to prepare for class.
3. Arrive early and attend all class meetings and required meetings with the professor.
4. Offer helpful comments during discussions and activities and encourage comments from your fellow classmates.
5. Treat everyone with respect.
6. Participate in course activities with genuine enthusiasm and interest. Attitude is key.
7. Be attentive while others are talking or presenting.
8. Only engage in class activities during class.
9. Ensure all electronic devices are turned off during class, except for those allowed.
10. Take good notes during class meetings.
11. Visit with me, work with each other, and seek help from students who've taken the class before to learn the material outside of class.

14.0 Cell Phones, Laptops, and other Electronic Devices

Very recent research shows that taking notes by hand with pen and paper results in far better learning than when taking notes on a digital devise. (See me for the sources.) Even so, you may bring and use a laptop or tablet computer with wireless connectivity during class, but please use it only to help you in your learning this class' content and not surf the Web, chat with people, or do any other nonclass-related stuff. If you find something useful that pertains to the course's content, please share it with the class. Turn off your device's volume. No earphones or headphones are allowed. Video and audio recording is prohibited.

Please turn **off** all other electronic devices while attending class. *If your phone goes off in class, or if you are using a high-tech device that I have not approved for use in this class, you will automatically lose 5 points for each occurrence*. See me before class if you must have your cell phone on because of a legitimate need to do so. You may use a device only with my approval.

15.0 Class Format

In this course I like to connect the dots between theory and practice because they inform and rely on each other. Also, in the design of this course, I apply many of the practices and demands of "real world" so you can become prepared for how you will be managed in your jobs after graduation. We all are students, so our class meetings will be "seminar style," where we examine, discuss, and work with course material.

Because this class bridges theory and practice, it relies heavily on discussion and your participation. I will track how well (i.e., quality and quantity) everyone contributes to class discussion (see the file in Canvas' assignments list). Topics and appropriate readings are planned for each meeting, and we may pursue other avenues in our investigation of public relations. Lessons and skills in writing, critical thinking, and communication from other classes will be important. *You are expected to read and think critically about the material for each class, which will be important to succeeding in the assignments.*

16.0 Class Meetings

The following are policies about specific matters for class meetings.

- <u>Starting On Time</u> — The official starting time for class meetings is ***not*** your arrival time. Come early! We will begin on time, and this is why your assignments are due before/by the official starting time of class as stated in the semester schedule. Remember this and act on it: "Early is on time. On time is late. Late is unacceptable."
- <u>Finishing Early</u> — Whenever we finish our class meetings early, this still can be important time for you to help your own learning at an individual level. Visit with me, talk with each other, or get things organized for yourself in that time. You may leave, if you wish. But remember that because we all have our class meetings already blocked off in our schedules, the time can be used well for your individual needs. And you can still visit with one of us during office hours and make appointments.
- <u>Continued/Open Topic Days</u> — Days on the Course Schedule may be open-ended so that we can discuss subjects and issues that need extra time to cover or matters you want to cover not in the Course Schedule that are directly related to this course. If the schedule shows such days, you should submit ideas *a week or more in advance* so suitable preparation can be made for the class. Alternatively, if no ideas are offered, I will choose to address a topic that was raised in a prior class meeting that is worthy of more exploration. Anyone who submits ideas will be expected to play a lead role in class discussion, but I will assemble material for the class. Plan on being accountable for the material covered during these days on exams and assignments.
- <u>Late Start to Class</u> — On the very rare possibility that I am not in class promptly at the official starting time (or early), rest assured that I am on my way. Please remain in the classroom until I arrive. I will take attendance. We'll cover what material we can that is scheduled for that day. Any homework that is due will be collected. Any exam scheduled for that day will be given as planned.
- <u>Class Cancellation</u> — Only two conditions are likely to exist when classes are cancelled: (1) ISU's president has closed the university for a weather-related or another reason, or (2) I am unable to make it to ISU because of an illness, jury duty, or another situation. In any case, if class is cancelled, you will receive an official notice by e-mail. If I must cancel class, a notice will be posted in the classroom and/or on the doorway. Any assignment due or exam scheduled for a day when class is cancelled will be due or done at the next class meeting. If classes are cancelled and no assignment or exam is scheduled, we will forego covering the material we planned for that day and continue with material scheduled for the next class period. Any questions about material planned for a cancelled class meeting can be handled by visiting with me in my offices, sending an e-mail, using Canvas chat, or answering questions at the next class meeting. In either situation, expect me to hold class online through Canvas during an announced day and time to cover planned material, and attendance will be optional.

17.0 Attendance

I expect you to come to every class meeting, just like you would attend meetings for a job you would hold, and I will take attendance for each class period. My main objective with my attendance policy is to inspire you to take responsibility for "reporting to work" and, if you cannot, take responsibility for telling me

why and having bonafide documentation whenever possible. This objective and policy are based on industry practices. "Blowing off" class/work is bad and unacceptable behavior.

17.1 Excused and Unexcused Absences

For an absence to be considered "excused" you must inform me prior to class, if at all possible. Excused absences include participation in a university-sanctioned event, the death of a family member (see **University Policy and Procedures 2.1.27 Student Bereavement Policy (http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-27.shtml)** online), incapacitating illness, and natural disaster. Other absences (e.g., cold/flu, weddings, babies, car trouble, house/apartment problem, etc.) will be considered individually, and documentation will be necessary. For any absence to be excused I require written verification of the reason for missing class. If your absence will be extensive, contact the Dean of Students Office immediately.

Absences because of personal/vacation travel I typically will not excuse because the university calendar has been available, and everyone should have used it when planning such travel so that it doesn't interfere with school. (This is equivalent to when companies don't let employees take vacations when business needs are particularly high.) I may grant exceptions when travel had to have been booked significantly in advance and there is documentation to that effect.

17.2 Late Arrival to Class and Attendance Implications

Late arrival to class (i.e., less than 30 minutes after class begins) will not be penalized under the attendance policy, although I may note you were late on the attendance sheet. Late arrival after 30 minutes of class qualifies as an unexcused absence. Remember to sign in! If an assignment is due and you are late, the penalty for late work will be enforced. (See the "Assignments Expectations" section of this syllabus.) If you drive to campus, always give yourself time—at least twice the amount of time you think you need—to find a parking spot and get to class. And that should be the rule whether you drive to campus from town or from some other area of the state or country.

17.3 Your Responsibility for Course Material

If you miss class or are late, you are responsible for turning in all assignments and obtaining all assignments, notes, and any other information that is given in class, including any alterations to this syllabus. I will not "reteach" material for you, although I'd be glad to answer specific questions. Again, excused absences and late arrivals (less than 30 minutes after class begins) will not count against you.

18.0 Online Communication

I use e-mail to communicate directly to you as an individual and as a class. Clean out and check your ISU e-mail account frequently for notes or announcements from me, your fellow students, the department, and the college. *Not checking your e-mail or Canvas is not grounds for any excuse for not doing or not doing well on any assignment. It's your responsibility to (1) keep your e-mail accounts open and up-to-date and (2) monitor your e-mail and Canvas class news frequently.*

You must get used to the fact that good language use is necessary in every written document you prepare. This includes e-mail. I will only open and respond to your e-mail me within 24 hours when:

1. A clear and simple subject line is given that, within 10 words or less, says exactly which class you're in and what topic(s) you're writing about. Don't be lazy and leave an old subject line from a previous e-mail I sent that has nothing to do with your e-mail's content. I will not reply to e-mail that recycles old subject lines that are not directly related to your e-mail content.
2. Your e-mail text is written effectively and concisely, and it should be as free of errors as possible.

By the way, I will apply these rules when I send e-mail to you. Follow my example for e-mail I send you.

19.0 Online Course Material

I use Canvas extensively to organize the material for this course and make announcements about our class. You can access Canvas through My.IllinoisState.edu. If you have problems with Canvas, let me know *and* call the Help Desk at 309-438-4357.

The Canvas site for this class contains additional, required, and helpful reading material for this course. This material used in connection with the course may be subject to copyright protection. Your viewing of the material posted on Canvas does not imply any right to reproduce, to retransmit or to redisplay it other than for your own personal or educational use. Links to other sites are provided for the convenience of the site user (staff or student) or visitor and do not imply any affiliation or endorsement of the other site owner nor a guarantee of the quality or veracity of information contained on the linked site.

Many files are PDFs and should open easily with Adobe Acrobat Reader to view and print them. If you don't have this free software, go to **http://www.adobe.com** ⤷ **(http://www.adobe.com)** to download that software.

20.0 Academic Dishonesty

You are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the **Code of Student Conduct (https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/code/)** and any additional syllabus language. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else's work, is plagiarism. Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) without proper attribution or authorization would also be a form of plagiarism. If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, please reach out to me to discuss it as soon as possible. Any allegation of a violation of this section may be referred to **Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities (https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/resolution/)**, a unit of the Dean of Students Office for possible sanctioning. In addition, a grade penalty can also be applied.

21.0 Assignments Expectations

All your study of public relations should pay off in this class, which is a capstone course for the PR major. If you go into the field of public relations or other field of communication for a career, you will be paid to be your organization's best communicators in all forms—written and oral, physical and virtual, interpersonal and public. I designed this course around this premise, and I try to approximate "real world" problems, pressures and planning that you will need to both enter and succeed in PR.

The assignments are designed with ambiguity built in, which should inspire you to think analytically about what you know and what you're learning so you can create the best product. So I expect you to have questions about the assignments, because in the "real world" you do not get precise recipes for everything you need to do—you'll have a college degree, probably one or more internships, and a job where you'll be paid to figure things out, so build this skillset now. (See "My Philosophy of Teaching and Learning.")

21.1 Turning in Your Work

A vital part of evaluating and returning **your** work is being able to manage and retain **your** files that you turn in for all assignments. There is far too much variation in the way everyone names their files and turns them in.

So to ensure that I have and use the files correctly for everyone in class, the rules for turning in your work given below must be followed. *In fact, these rules are so important that I will impose a **five-point penalty** on any assignment for anyone who does not follow any of these rules. Any assignments turned in after the first one that breaks any of these rules will not be evaluated and will be scored **zero (0) points**.*

1. Use only the file templates I provide for assignments when I provide such template files for assignments. Use only Microsoft Office products to prepare your work. If you use another product, it must be saved in the format I can open *and* (Another product may be used only with my permission or only as a last resort, if and only if I have that software.) If your file does not match what I assigned and expect, particularly when I provide a template, your work will be evaluated accordingly (i.e., negatively).
2. Name your files with your last name (team members' last names for group projects) then with the assignment in abbreviated form (e.g., Smudde TS1; Smudde Job Memo; Smudde-Lippert-Hunt SPP).
3. Put your name (names for group work) on the top if the first page of each assignment. Add the date and assignment name, if you wish.
4. Use only Microsoft Office products, particularly those for which templates are provided for assignments. See all assignments for directions about what is expected. Do not turn in handwritten work (including photos of such work) as responses to assignments, including extra-credit work, *if given*.
5. Email your actual file as an attachment—*NOT A LINK TO A FILE*—directly to me at my ISU email account. Do not upload to Canvas; whereas, doing so will result in no evaluation of your work and a score of zero (0) for the assignment. Your work must be turned in before/by the assignment's deadline given in the "Course Schedule" and in accord with Section 20.2. I will use your e-mail's time-date stamp to determine whether your work is late or not. You may choose to turn in work in advance of the due date—especially if you are going to be absent the day an assignment is due.

I will critique all work that is submitted properly; however, if a paper is not remotely close to the assignment as given, I reserve the right to withhold all points and score the work as zero (0). Documentation supporting an excused absence or late arrival to class would be considered to forgive the penalty for late work. Also see the "Learning Assessments" and "Course Grading Policy" sections in this syllabus.

21.2 Late Work Policy

All assignments are due no later than the official starting time for class on the dates indicated in the "Course Schedule" in the syllabus (or a different day and time any assignment is due that is communicated to all). **I will not accept late work, even work that is one (1) second late—late work will receive a score of zero (0) points.** In public relations (actually in all professions) deadlines must be upheld, and if you work for an agency, you can endanger the business of the firm by missing deadlines. If you are having trouble completing your work for this class, contact me and the Dean of Students Office immediately. Also see Section 16.0.

21.3 Technology and Late Work

For your own protection, as you work on any computer to complete your assignments, remember to:

- Frequently save your work.
- Always backup your work on another medium.
- Always protect your files and computer from viruses and malware.
- Always make sure your device, any of its peripheral technologies, and your software applications operate flawlessly in every way, including with online applications, for you to complete and turn in your work.
- Always make sure your work, if it is to be emailed, is submitted with enough time before a deadline (day and time) for the system to process the sending of your work.

I will not accept work turned in late because you had technology problems and did not follow these cardinal rules for technology use or couldn't find a computer to use. Documentation supporting an actual, bonafide communications carrier system outage (e.g., ISU, Comcast, Mediacom, etc.) or genuine system-related communications errors or crashes with your device or location's system (e.g., home/apartment internet or wireless connection) *may* be applied to forgive this penalty.

21.4 Extenuating Circumstances & Turning in Work

If a student has an extenuating circumstance (e.g., illness, family emergency) that requires the student to miss class on the due date of any assignment, the student must, according to Section 16.1, provide documentation of the reason for the absence that also will be used to *consider* a possible extension for

turning in the assigned work. Importantly, however, is the fact that assignments in the class have been available and addressed in class since the beginning of the semester. In this way, therefore, any student ought to have developed any assignment progressively to be ready to turn it in on or before the due date.

21.5 Feedback on Work in Progress

The first draft of any public relations or advertising writing is seldom successful. Most writing goes through numerous drafts and multiple reviews until the writer and the client are satisfied. In this class we do not have the time to simulate this experience, thus we will not rewrite assignments for credit. Instead of rewrites, I encourage you to seek my feedback while you work on your assignments. By this I mean you prepare draft material in advance of the deadlines and visit with me to review your work "in progress" and ask questions. This way you get feedback about your writing—to see if you are on "the right track."

*Note that my giving feedback is not "pregrading": I will **not** look for everything that is good/bad or right/wrong, but I will point out aspects or patterns of your writing that work or are problematic. I also will not do proofreading—that is your job.* Time permitting, you may ask for my feedback after class meetings, but it's usually best during office hours or appointments. *Only two drafts are allowed per assignment, and I will not accept drafts to review after 12 p.m. three days before an assignment is due because I need time to review it for you and, most important, you need time to work with my feedback.*

22.0 Evaluations of Assignments

After you submit your finished work for an assignment, I will probably give my most focused comments on the first page or two of your papers because after that the errors/problems very likely will be repetitive. I may note other things in later pages, but a lack of comments is not necessarily an indication of correctness or effectiveness. I also won't find absolutely everything because time is of the essence, and getting you your evaluated work sooner than later serves you and me well. I firmly believe that my detailed comments and corrections in the first couple pages and elsewhere that I note are enough to indicate to you what I see, and you should learn from and look for those things elsewhere in the paper. Of course, if you want more detailed help, visit with me.

23.0 Returned Work

I will make every effort to return work to you promptly. Most short assignments will be returned at the next class. Longer assignments may take one or two weeks. I will only return assignments to their authors. If you are not in class when an assignment is returned, please pick it up during your professor's office hours or after class.

24.0 Keep Your Work for Job Hunting

If you plan to pursue a career in public relations or other field, having a set of solid examples of your work in a "professional portfolio" will be important for you to get an internship and/or your first full-time job. For PR majors, you will be required in COM 378 to create a professional portfolio. So make sure you keep very clean copies of the work you do in this and all your PR classes. Remember: no matter what score you received on any assignment, look for ways to make your examples even better, if not "perfect." Outside of your coursework you may ask for some help from us in the PR faculty while you make your portfolio.

25.0 Assigned Readings

- Anderson, C. (2014, June). How to give a killer presentation. *Harvard Business Review*, 121-125.
- Brønn, P. S. (2000, July). *A reflective stakeholder approach: Co-orientation as a basis for communication and learning*. Paper presented at the 7th International Public Relations Research Symposium in Bled, Slovenia.
- Burke, E. M. (1999). *Corporate community relations: The principle of the neighbor or choice*. Westport, CT: Praeger. [Introduction, chapters 1, 2 and 12].
- Cook. J. S. (1989). Humor. *The elements of speechwriting and public speaking*. New York: Longman.
- Crescenzo, S. (2004). Putting words in the boss's mouth: Ghost writing for senior executives is a scary proposition, [sic] and one of the biggest challenges writers face. But it can be done. *Writer & Editor*, 4-6.
- Finerman, E. (1996, March 1). Humor and speeches. *Vital Speeches of the day, 62*(10), 313-315.
- Hamm, J. (1992, August/September). Boosting creativity through research. *Executive Speeches*, 32-36.
- Hart, J. (1997, March). 25 ways to supercharge your manuscript. *Writer's Digest*. [Exceptions are tips 1 and 15, which come from Pete Smudde.]
- Hillbrunner, A. (1974). Archetype and signature: Nixon and the 1973 Inaugural. *Central States Speech Journal, 25*(3), 169-181.
- Lukaszewski, J. E. (2005, November). Talking business: The secrets, strategies and skills to making power and purposeful presentations. *Tactics*, 14.
- Moorehouse, C. (2005, May 29). *Advice for working with a speechwriter*. Washington Speechwriters Roundtable. Available: **http://www.washingtonspeechwriters.com/blog/_archives/2005** ⤷ **(http://www.washingtonspeechwriters.com/blog/_archives/2005)**
- Schweppe, E. (2005). *Top 10 Tips: Choosing and working with speechwriters*. Available: **www.ifinancialmarketing.com/article.asp?id=111** ⤷ **(http://www.ifinancialmarketing.com/article.asp?id=111)** [See a similar cached version **http://www.zoominfo.com/CachedPage/? archive_id=0&page_id=-1777236994&page_url=//www.washingtonspeechwriters.com/blog/Articles/_archives/2005/5/15/860148.html&page_last_ 12-12T04:57:55&firstName=Ellen&lastName=Schweppe** ⤷ **(http://www.zoominfo.com/CachedPage/? archive_id=0&page_id=-1777236994&page_url=//www.washingtonspeechwriters.com/blog/Articles/_archives/2005/5/15/860148.html&page_last_updated=2011- 12-12T04:57:55&firstName=Ellen&lastName=Schweppe)**]
- Seeger, M. W. (1992). Ethical issues in corporate speechwriting. *Journal of Business Ethics, 11*, 501-504.
- Starks, C. J. (2011, April 29). Try this 6-step approach to editing speeches. Available: **http://www.ragan.com/Main/Articles/34436.aspx** ⤷ **(http://www.ragan.com/Main/Articles/34436.aspx)**
- Stevens, W. W. (1963). Attention through language. *Today's Speech, 11*(4), 23-25.
- Toogood, G. (1996). How to read a prepared text like a pro (and not look like you're reading). *The articulate executive* (pp.119-153). McGraw Hill.
- Weissman, P. (2003, January 15). Speechwriting secrets from the Senate: Learn from every speech. *Vital Speeches of the Day, 69*(7), 208-212.

NOTE: We may alter aspects of these policies, the course schedule, and other topics in this syllabus as the course progresses. You are responsible for noting any such changes, which will be announced in class, emailed, and/or posted on Canvas.

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