



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**ADVERTISING AND
PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Clients for GVSU Advertising/Public Relations Courses

The Advertising/Public Relations program at Grand Valley State University has long stressed the integration of theoretical concepts with practical application in many of its classes. To enhance that learning opportunity for students, and the service it provides to many nonprofits and businesses in the West Michigan community, we have organized and clarified the expectations of students and clients for each of the classes in which they interact.

General expectations for students:

- A professional approach to the assignments.
- Adherence to deadlines.
- Consistency with the objectives of the client.
- Application of course theories and approaches.
- Responsibility, initiative, and follow-up.
- Flexibility for the client's convenience.

General expectations for clients:

- Well-defined projects that can be completed in the timeframe of a semester.
- Availability to meet with students to explain, guide, and offer feedback for the project. This usually includes coming to a class meeting once at the beginning and end of the semester, and being available by phone and email throughout the semester for students' questions.
- Accommodation of the student's need for a learning experience.
- Financial support for incidental expenses incurred (should be budgeted in advance by students) such as postage or printing quantities of materials for client use. Students are expected to pay for their own and the client's copy the plan books, reports, or one draft of written material produced.

Course Descriptions

The following describes the content and goals of each course that engages students in service/learning with clients. The list below also identifies the type and number of clients sought and the type of work to be performed for the client.

CAP 321: Media Relations Writing

Course Description: The first of two writing courses for PR majors focuses on media relations. Students will write news releases, tip sheets, advisories, pitch letters, backgrounders, position papers, media kits and other public relations tools used in media relations.

Client needed: Need several clients from the community with need for media relations materials to be written, in particular a media kit. Students work individually, but more than one may work for the same client.

Work performed: Students will be required to produce a media kit for general organizational use or for a specific event, product or other PR opportunity. Students will be able to revise their work. The kit may include news releases, backgrounders, position papers, fact sheets and other media relations tools deemed necessary by the student/client. The media kit must be designed for media relations, and not as a sales packet or other non-media use. Students will also compile a media contact list.

Benefit to client: A media kit and contact list, to be sent to journalists in an effort to gain publicity.

CAP 423: Writing Corporate Communications

Course Description: The second PR writing course has a focus on writing for internal publications and communication tools to meet organizational objectives.

Client needed: Need several clients from the community. Client will provide a variety of writing assignments listed in “work performed.” More than one student may be assigned to a client, but each student is expected to complete five different writing projects on their own.

Work performed: After completing a communication audit and communications plan, students will write a portfolio of four of the following: brochures, newsletters, ad copy, annual report copy, speeches, video scripts, Web site copy, position papers in consultation with the client. All of the items should be consistent with the communication plan.

Benefit to client: An outside perspective on a comprehensive communication plan, plus cost-effective completion of strategic, written communication tactics.

CAP 495: Advertising and Public Relations Campaigns

Course Description: An advanced-level course in which student teams (“agencies”) plan and present a public relations campaign for an off-campus business or nonprofit organization.

Clients needed: Need 4-6 clients from the community with an actual public relations or advertising problem or opportunity requiring a full campaign.

Work performed: Students work in groups much like an Ad or PR department or firm. The emphasis is on application of the concepts learned in the previous courses. Students research, plan, launch, and evaluate (or prescribe evaluation methods) an actual campaign on behalf of a client. Tactics can range broadly from news releases (earned media), to various forms of ads (paid media), to any type of internal tactics such as annual reports, brochures, Web/social and more (owned media).

Client benefit: A professional-quality campaign. Clients are expected to cover costs associated with developing and launching the campaign (copying, printing, mailing, etc) which typically happens after the class is finished.