

Written Communication Outcomes 1.1A.1, 1.1A.2; and Critical Thinking Outcome 1.5.3

Course: BCOM695 Corporate Communication

Objectives: Students will effectively develop, express, and exchange ideas in the English language, . . . in writing . . . , with clarity and coherence. Students will recognize, analyze, criticize, evaluate, and formulate arguments in ways characterized by intellectual courage and reflective self-criticism.

By graduation students will:	Not Proficient 1 Point	Developing Proficiency 2 Points	Proficient 3 Points	Exceeding Proficiency 4 Points
Write a <i>persuasive essay</i> that includes the following: a clear and debatable thesis, fully developed and supported ideas, clear organizational structure, effective consideration of opposing arguments, use of credible sources, appropriate documentation of sources, consideration of a target audience, and conventional grammar and mechanics. (1.1A.1)	Essay lacks a clear and debatable thesis, or it fails to persuade its target audience, perhaps because the ideas are not fully developed and supported or because it overwhelmingly fails to conform to conventional grammar and mechanics.	Essay is somewhat persuasive, but fails to adequately consider the target audience, or lacks credible and appropriately documented sources, or fails to address opposing arguments, or has too many grammatical/ mechanical errors.	Essay is effectively persuasive of the target audience, supporting a clear thesis with credible and appropriately documented sources and thoroughly addressing opposing arguments.	Essay is masterfully persuasive, demonstrating exceptional skill and finesse.
Produce a <i>discipline-specific document</i> judged proficient according to a department-approved rubric in the student’s major. (1.1A.2)	Document does not demonstrate one or more element of courtesy, care, conventionality and its style and content is not tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience. It is wordy, unorganized, and or unclear. It is difficult to identify the “who, what, when, and where” of the event.	Document may not demonstrate courtesy or conventionality and has more significant issues with care. Its style and content are not well tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience. It may not fully address the “who, what, when, and where” of the event but may be arranged by importance.	Document demonstrates courtesy, care, conventionality and its style and content is tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience. It is clear including the “who, what, when, and where” of the event but one of these elements is not fully addressed. The document is organized but perhaps not optimally so and may be a little wordy.	Document demonstrates courtesy, care, conventionality and its style and content is exceptionally tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience. It is very concise and clear including the “who, what, when, and where” of the event and is organized by importance.
Produce a written document on a difficult question involving the disciplinary content of the student’s major that subjects the student’s reasoning to <i>sustained, intelligent criticism</i> according to the standards of that discipline. (1.5.3)	The essay may mention other critics but does little more with their ideas. No objections to the current paper’s thesis or supporting points are addressed.	The arguments of other critics are considered, including at least one objection to the current paper’s thesis or supporting points, but this consideration is less consistent or thorough than the ideal.	The arguments of other critics for relevant interpretations are addressed, including objections to the current paper’s thesis or supporting points.	The arguments of other critics for relevant interpretations are thoughtfully addressed. The essay thoroughly explores objections to the current paper’s thesis.

- Program: Bachelor of Science in Business Education, Concentration in Corporate Communication
- Course: BCOM695 Corporate Communication
- Assignment to meet 1.1A.1: BCOM695 Critical/Persuasive Consultant Report: Evaluating External Corporate Communication
- Assignment to meet 1.1A.2: BCOM695 Press Release Assignment
- Assignment to meet 1.5.3: BCOM695 Critical/Persuasive Consultant Report: Evaluating External Corporate Communication

BCOM 695 Critical/Persuasive Consultant Report:

Evaluating External Corporate Communication

Assignment: Write a report as a corporate communication consultant evaluating external corporate communication.

Identify an organization (can be a business, nonprofit, government) that has experienced a recent (within the past five years) need to communicate with external stakeholders. For example, a business may need to respond to evidence its products are not safe, customer data breaches, or discrimination lawsuits. Evaluate the organization's official communication issued through a variety of media/channel combinations such as social media, press releases, and public statements, and argue why it was exemplary, sufficient, or inadequate.

Considering your knowledge of organizational crisis response, apologies, and reputation/image management, make a persuasive case to support your evaluation.

Use practical evidence from your investigation into the context of the communication and theoretical claims from your academic reading to support and challenge your arguments. You must engage opposing evaluations of the response. In other words, consider what arguments one could make opposing your position and make sure to address them in your paper.

Assessment: A rubric will be used to assess this assignment.

BCOM695 Student-Facing Persuasive, Critical Writing Rubric

	Not Proficient-1	Developing Proficiency-2	Proficient-3	Exceeding Proficiency-4
Professional	Message is unprofessional. It has significant issues with courtesy (tone is offensive, violates standards of business etiquette); care (sloppy, careless, filled with errors that detract from credibility); and/or conventionality (not conforming to professional for message type). No evidence of audience consideration: word choice, sentence style, and content are possibly too informal for the audience—or too jargon-filled or simplistic for the audience. Bottom line: the language and/or content seem inappropriate for the audience.	Message is somewhat professional. It may have minor issues with courtesy (using too casual of a tone); and more significant issues with care (having several errors or marked inattention to detail) and conventionality (not conforming to professional standards for message type). Some evidence of audience consideration but with many lapses.	Message is mostly professional, but may have minor issues with courtesy (using too casual of a tone); care (having a few errors or some inattention to detail); or conventionality (not fully meeting professional standards for message type). Consistent evidence of audience consideration: appropriate word choice, sentence style, and content overall—with minor lapses only.	Message is very professional. It demonstrates courtesy (tactful, follows standards of business etiquette); care (error free, careful attention to detail); and conventionality (fully meets professional standards for message type or demonstrates high-quality creativity). Style and content are exceptionally well tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience.
Clear	Message is unclear. There is no apparent central idea. Supporting points and information are disorganized. Problems with ambiguous language or awkward wording make the message confusing. Formatting detracts from the receiver's comprehension.	Message is somewhat clear. The central idea may be missing, implied, or ambiguous, raising some concerns with clarity. Supporting points and information may be present, but may not be ordered logically. Formatting is absent or used in a way that does not aid receiver comprehension.	Message is mostly clear. The central idea is explicitly stated, but it may be saved until the end. Supporting points and information are organized clearly, but may not be optimally ordered. Ideas are expressed in a way that is easy for the receiver to follow. Formatting is proficiently used to organize the main points visually.	Message is very clear. The central idea is clearly presented (thesis statement, subject line, etc.). Message is organized in top down manner (i.e., leads with main idea). Supporting points and information are organized clearly and ordered logically. Ideas are expressed in a way that is easy for the receiver to follow. Formatting is expertly used to present the main points with maximum clarity.
Concise	Key information is difficult for the receiver to find. Poor balance of essential and nonessential information.	May be missing some key information or may include too much nonessential information. Message is wordy.	Most essential information is included; most nonessential information is excluded. Message may be somewhat wordy or inefficient.	Message shows careful consideration of receiver's needs for content. Essential information is included; nonessential information is excluded. Message is presented in a concise and efficient way.
Evidence-Driven	Use of evidence is problematic. Little or no evidence is provided to support claims. Alternatively, evidence is presented deceptively or with significant inaccuracies in text, tables, and graphics. Evidence is selected from irrelevant, out-of-date, or otherwise dubious sources. Citations are missing.	Use of evidence is adequate. Some claims are supported by evidence, or the connection between the evidence and the point it is supporting is not immediately clear. Text, tables, and graphics may have minor inaccuracies or issues with clarity. Credibility of evidence is not established. Citations are incomplete or inefficient.	Use of evidence is good. Most claims are supported by relevant evidence. Evidence is presented accurately, even if inefficiently. The quality of the evidence is strong, but may leave assessment of quality to the receiver (e.g., citations may omit key details, source quality may not be explained).	Use of evidence is excellent. All claims are clearly supported by high quality, highly relevant evidence. Evidence is presented skillfully with a mix of text, tables, and graphics. The quality of the evidence is strong (relevant, credible, and current), and is explicitly established through complete source citations, explanation of source quality, description of analysis, etc.
Critical	No opposing arguments are raised—or if they are, they are irrelevant and/or inconsequential.	Relevant and consequential opposing arguments are raised but are not adequately developed, not adequately addressed, or both.	Relevant and consequential opposing arguments are raised, adequately developed, and adequately addressed.	The most important opposing arguments are raised, thoroughly developed, and masterfully addressed.

BCOM695 Press Releases Assignment

Assignment: Write a press release announcing information (such as a change, event, or response to a crisis) to organizational stakeholders.

Press releases are an effective way for organizations to get messages out. They allow an organization to create its own news stories and to circulate it to the public through news and industry outlets.

A good press release is a clear, focused, and readable account of specific information that an organization wants the public to know. They are similar to news stories and well-written ones will often be reprinted with few changes by newspapers and other media outlets, ensuring the message gets passed on to the public. Thus, it is important that the press release present the message *professionally, concisely, clearly and with necessary support*.

Parts of a Standard Press Release:

Press releases generally have eight parts, presented in the following order:

- 1) Letterhead or logo of the organization
- 2) Release time (either "For Immediate Release" or for release on a specific date)
- 3) Date
- 4) Headline that highlights the content of the message (e.g., CEO of Big Apple Grocery Announces New Sustainability Policy) in uppercase letters, boldface, or both;
- 5) Location (e.g., Hays, Kansas)
- 6) Body copy (5-7 short paragraphs)
- 7) Contact name for further information
- 8) End: marked by ### centered under the copy

Tips for Structuring the Press Release:

- Start with a strong headline.
- Decide what the most important element of your message is, the part you most want your readers to remember. State it in 10 words or less. *Ask yourself if what you wrote would make sense to someone not familiar with the subject.*
- Start your first paragraph with a strong lead, something that will catch readers' attention and lead them into the rest of the piece.
- The lead paragraph should cover who, what, where, when and how, as applicable. This paragraph conveys all the important information.
- Then, present the details of the story, starting with the most interesting or pertinent information, followed by the rest of the details in order of decreasing importance.

Keep the length to 1 page single-spaced, approximately five or seven short paragraphs, with no more than a few sentences per paragraph.

Assessment:

A rubric will be used to assess the document.

BCOM695 Student-Facing Press Release Rubric

	Not Proficient-1	Developing Proficiency-2	Proficient-3	Exceeding Proficiency-4
Professional	Message is unprofessional. It has significant issues with courtesy (tone is offensive, violates standards of business etiquette); care (sloppy, careless, filled with errors that detract from credibility); and/or conventionality (not conforming to professional for message type). No evidence of audience consideration: word choice, sentence style, and content are possibly too informal for the audience—or too jargon-filled or simplistic for the audience. Bottom line: the language and/or content seem inappropriate for the audience.	Message is somewhat professional. It may have minor issues with courtesy (using too casual of a tone); and more significant issues with care (having several errors or marked inattention to detail) and conventionality (not conforming to professional standards for message type). Some evidence of audience consideration but with many lapses.	Message is mostly professional, but may have minor issues with courtesy (using too casual of a tone); care (having a few errors or some inattention to detail); or conventionality (not fully meeting professional standards for message type). Consistent evidence of audience consideration: appropriate word choice, sentence style, and content overall—with minor lapses only.	Message is very professional. It demonstrates courtesy (tactful, follows standards of business etiquette); care (error free, careful attention to detail); and conventionality (fully meets professional standards for message type or demonstrates high-quality creativity). Style and content are exceptionally well tailored to the needs and interests of the target audience.
Clear	Message is unclear. There is no apparent central idea. Supporting points and information are disorganized. Problems with ambiguous language or awkward wording make the message confusing. Formatting detracts from the receiver's comprehension.	Message is somewhat clear. The central idea may be missing, implied, or ambiguous, raising some concerns with clarity. Necessary details were missing or details were not correctly organized by level of importance. Formatting is absent or used in a way that does not aid reader comprehension.	Message is mostly clear. First paragraph includes the “who, what, where, & when” of the event and accurate description of topic. Details may not be optimally ordered. Ideas are expressed in a way that is easy for the reader to follow. Formatting is proficiently used to organize the main points visually.	Message is very clear. First paragraph includes the “who, what, where, & when” and a clear and accurate description of topic. Details are organized by level of importance. Ideas are expressed in a way that is easy for the reader to follow. Formatting is expertly used to present the main points with maximum clarity.
Concise	Key information is difficult for the reader to find. Poor balance of essential and nonessential information.	May be missing some key information or may include too much nonessential information. Message is wordy.	Most essential information is included; most nonessential information is excluded. Message may be somewhat wordy or inefficient.	Message shows careful consideration of reader’s needs for content. Essential information is included; nonessential information is excluded. Message is presented in a concise and efficient way.
Evidence-Driven	Press release did not use any statistics or quotations to support the aims of the communication. Press release did not accurately present information for the type and stage of the change. Stakeholder interests are not addressed.	Press release included some relevant support, but it was not accurately presented and/or was not appropriate for the type and stage of the change. Stakeholder interests are not clearly addressed.	Author demonstrated that they collected information on the change, incorporating statistics and/or quotations to support the aims of the press release. Press release accurately presented information for the type and stage of the change. Stakeholder interests could be more clearly addressed.	Author demonstrated that they collected and evaluated relevant change and stakeholder interest to determine stakeholder interest, incorporating appropriate statistics and/or quotations to support the aims of the press release. Press release accurately presented information for the type and stage of the change.