

Reflection Essay

This class, along with my PR Research class, showed me how diverse the public relations industry is in terms of the different jobs that can be done. Prior to taking this class, I wasn't all familiar with all the intricacies that went into the day-to-day jobs that most PR Professionals performed. I learned more about media relations in particular and was also surprised to learn about other components in PR work. Some examples are speeches and PSAs. Prior to taking this class, I really was not aware that a PR professional would be expected to create this content.

Another valuable benefit from this class has been the development of my professional writing and communication skills. I have noticed an improvement in myself when it comes to sending emails and asking for favors. This semester, I began communicating more often with local media professional as a leader of a Cronkite club and the skills I learned in this class helped me feel more comfortable when approaching them and corresponding with them, whether it was over email or LinkedIn. I had always been timid when it came to approaching professionals I was unfamiliar with, but I have begun to utilize many of the techniques I learned in this class.

Finally, this class helped me build the confidence I need to work in the Public Relations lab as well as to look and apply for PR Internships. I was hesitant to get started in my search for internships prior to this class, but now I feel more qualified to work with and learn from other professionals in the field. It has also made me much more confident in choosing the public relations route during my time at Cronkite.

The most Challenging part of this class was finding angles to do assignments such as news releases and broadcast scripts. Because we were able to see the results of the actual scripts and releases in traditional media, it was an interesting experience having to write one from scratch and one that was different from what was already out there. I think that having a (somewhat) small nonprofit organization as a client was also challenging, as it pushed me to look harder for information. After having had the experience of selecting a client such as Netflix for my other class, it was interesting having to do the research for a client who wasn't necessarily as prominent.

While this class—like any—had its challenging moments, I do believe that everything I learned this semester was absolutely valuable. The course had a lot of information packed in very quickly, but I am confident that the foundation that was built here will help me in the PR Lab and beyond. I am excited to see how I will be able to apply each concept in the future.

While Make-A-Wish is a large and significant nonprofit, I learned that for the most part, it is a more private organization, which often made it somewhat difficult to follow and find information on. For example, the organization was not consistently using press releases. The ones found online were published about once a month or more infrequently. As someone who is simply interested in learning more about the organization, I was disappointed to see that the website only featured a few stories of Make-A-Wish recipients. I would have loved to read about more wishes that had been granted. Make-A-Wish could use more storytelling to build

loyalty to the organization as well. Make-A-Wish also has the advantage of its already global image and association with many celebrities and influential people. Many children ask to meet their favorite celebrity, so I believe that using these celebrities as influencers for the organization will draw more attention and subsequently, more donors.