



Faculty of Professional Studies
Department of Communication Studies
PBRL 2288 (01) - Co-op Term II
Instructor – Ellen Shaffner
Course Outline for Fall 2020

Course information	
Section number:	PBRL 2288.01
Course dates:	9 September 2020 – 9 December 2020
Co-op faculty advisor:	Ellen Shaffner
E-mail:	ellen.shaffner@msvu.ca
Telephone:	902-880-4482
Office hours:	By appointment
Prerequisite:	PBRL 2015, 3012, 3013, 3014, COMM 3022 or permission of the department

Our Course

Course description

As you begin your second co-op work term, it will be important to think about how you can further develop your public relations skills. The course work for this term encourages you to seek opportunities to develop and apply your strategic thinking skills within the context of your co-op position and allows you to articulate those skills in online discussion with your peers and by developing a case study.

Your work term is more than just a job. Your co-op employer is an educational partner, giving you the opportunity to advance your academic and professional goals, adapt to change and build your confidence. The assignments for PBRL 2288 require you to reflect upon the application of communication theory in the workplace. During the semester you will use Moodle to take part in discussions about public relations practice with your peers and your co-op faculty advisor. You will also submit an individual case study in which you will use theory and/or precedent to analyze a particular project, issue, product or activity in which you were involved, or which you observed, during your time in the workplace.

Learning outcomes

During this semester you will:

- Identify specific aspects of the PR practitioner's function and responsibilities.
- Articulate learning objectives relevant to your job description and career interests.
- Reflect and document your co-op work term experience.
- Communicate with other practitioners in a professional manner using an online platform.
- Receive and provide peer support as you and your fellow co-op students reflect on your experience.
- Remain connected with your co-op peers and the co-operative education program even though you are not on campus.
- Engage your co-op faculty advisor throughout the work term by sharing information, providing mutual feedback, and receiving professional and academic advice and support.
- Understand and apply the concepts you were taught in your public relations courses, notably PBRL 3014 (Managing Organizational Public Relations).

Learning technologies

We will use the Moodle platform to engage in online discussion and to submit assignments. You will find there the most up-to-date schedule of content, course resources and supplementary readings, and reminders and announcements. *Please visit the course Moodle site regularly.*

If you need any help with any of Mount Online learning technologies, please email helpdesk@msvu.ca or visit [Online Learning](#). During regular business hours (AST) you may call 902-457-6538 and on evenings and weekends, call 902-457-6788.

Learning environment

During each of your co-op terms, you will participate in course work that is designed to connect your classroom learning with your professional on-the-job training.

- During this work term you will participate in a series of three synchronous discussions via collaborate. We will arrange the dates and times for these in the first two weeks of September, 2020.
- For each session, I will ask you to complete 1-2 readings and to prepare talking points based on several reflection questions, so that we can have a meaningful discussion.
- These sessions will also provide us with an opportunity to stay engaged with each other, share experiences, and receive guidance from me on your term project.

Expectations, etiquette and privacy

- Note that any content you post on Moodle will be visible to me and your peers. Your term project case study papers are seen only by the faculty advisor.
- Always remain professional and respectful during our group meetings and ensure that communications via email or phone are also of this nature.
- Always respect the privacy of your workplace and be careful not to include information that is personal, commercially sensitive, protected or confidential.
- Complete your course work on your own time; ***do not do the work while you are in the workplace.***

Anticipated timeline

	Group Discussions via Collaborate
1	September TBA
2	October TBA
3	November TBA

Case study

On or before **Sunday, December 6**, you will complete and submit a case study of about 1500-2000 words (six to eight pages; not including contents, references or appendices) drawn on your experience or your observation of a project, program or issue in your workplace. This assignment provides you with an opportunity to develop the report-writing skills necessary in today's workplace. Academically, it is your opportunity to analyze and reflect on a specific case of public relations practice. You will analyze your case in the context of what you have learned in the classroom about public relations.

In the case study, you will:

- Discuss how public relations is practiced in an organizational context, with reference to a specific case.
- Present your subject by identifying its specific and measurable communication objectives.
- Analyze your case by identifying and applying a relevant public relations theory and/or by researching and integrating historical precedents.
- Show how successful outcomes are or could be evaluated.
- Draw sound conclusions and make feasible and valid recommendations that may be applicable to future cases.

Case Study Details

You will receive more detailed guidelines about preparing your case study by participating in a **Collaborate meeting**. We will plan to discuss this during one of our agreed-upon discussion times, and we can meet for additional drop-in support sessions as needed while you complete this project.

Learning supports

Your learning is at the centre of this course. The Mount as a whole is committed to supporting you as a unique learner. The university offers a variety of resources, services, strategies and practices to support learning. If you require academic accommodation please contact me and [Accessibility Services](#) as early in the term as possible. I encourage you to draw on the variety of learning supports provided by the Mount to help you in time of need and to help you continue to develop as a learner. Please see Appendix A for additional information on the list of free and confidential services available at our university.

Your Instructor

Name	Ellen Shaffner, BA Hons, MBA, PhD (Candidate)
Teaching approach	My focus in this course is to provide support and encouragement as you continue to develop your professional skills. My approach is enthusiastic and encouraging, and I provide a learning environment that values your experiences as co-op students. I require that our group and one-on-one discussions be approached without judgement, that we foster debate and discussion, and that we all demonstrate respect for one another as we explore and learn together.
Contact	E-mail: ellen.shaffner@msvu.ca Phone: 902-880-4482
Availability	By appointment as needed. I am available for appointments outside of work hours to accommodate your schedules. You may send me an email to set up a meeting at a time that works for you. The University asks that we use our MSVU e-mail addresses for electronic communications. Please do so. Communication between students and professor may also happen in and through Moodle.
One-on-one support	I encourage you to reach out to me throughout this semester whenever you like. You can reach me by phone and e-mail. I am always happy to discuss your assignments, co-op experience, your career goals, or other subjects. I am here as a resource for you this semester, and I look forward to getting to know you!

Our Journey

Expectations	<p>You can expect the following from me as your instructor in this class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I will communicate regularly via moodle and email to ensure you feel connected to our course.• I will treat you with dignity and respect.• I will provide grades and feedback within a maximum of two weeks following submission. (If you have a question about the way you have been assessed, please reach out to me within ten days after the assignment is returned.) <p>I expect the following from you as a student in this class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will attend all our group meetings, you will prepare by reading the assigned material, and you will engage fully in our discussions.• You will respond to my emails and messages within 48 hours, and you will reach out to me when you need assistance.• You will have a positive and open-minded attitude.• You will submit your assignments on time.
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Assignments and assessment

You will receive a grade of “pass” or “fail” for your work term. To receive a grade of “pass” you will:

- receive an end of term evaluation of “satisfactory” or higher from your co-op employer;
- satisfactorily complete and submit **all** assigned course work (including the group discussions); and
- achieve an acceptable standard of participation in your course work.

Without successfully completing all of the assigned exercises, you will not earn a pass for PBRL 2288. **A failing grade in a co-op program results in dismissal from the program.**

Missed or late work

We will adhere to the assignment deadlines unless there are extraordinary circumstances. If you believe you will be unable to meet a deadline, discuss it with me *in advance*. It may be possible for us to make alternate arrangements if your difficulty is a valid one.

You may be asked to re-submit your work if it does not meet the stated objectives but could receive a passing grade with requested revisions. A revised submission must be re-submitted within five days after the co-op faculty advisor returns it to you. You will have only one chance to re-write a work term assignment. **Failure to revise the submission to a satisfactory level will result in a failing grade for the co-op term.**

If you have a question about an assessment, please contact me by e-mail within 10 days.

University Advisorles

Writing policy and use of language

Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments. Basic writing competency is required to pass this course. The obligation to meet the minimal standard lies with the student. If a faculty member determines that a student’s basic writing competency falls below the minimum standard for the course, the student will fail the course.

Accommodations

If you have a disability and require academic accommodations, you should register with [Accessibility Services](#) as early as possible in order to receive accommodations.

Scheduling conflicts

Students requesting special consideration as a result of a conflict with a deadline for an assignment, test, or an examination must do so in advance of the relevant deadline.

Academic integrity

You play a vital role in contribution to and maintaining the culture of academic integrity expected of everyone at MSVU. University regulations on Plagiarism and cheating and other academic offenses will be strictly enforced. These regulations including applicable procedures and penalties are detailed in the University Calendar and are posted on Department notice boards and on the Mount website at

www.msvu.ca on the Current Students page under [Academic Offenses](#). It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with these regulations and consequences.

- Religious observances** Requests for accommodation of specific religious or spiritual observance must be presented in writing to the instructor within the first two weeks of class.
- Research ethics** Students who conduct research involving human participants must have their research reviewed in accordance with the [MSVU Policies and Procedures for Ethics Review of Research Involving Humans](#) before starting the research. Check with your course professor or Chair of the Department about proper procedure.
- Use of course material** Please observe the following:
- Course material to which you are granted access in this course is only to be used for this course.
 - Material that you submit as part of the requirements of this course cannot be used to complete the requirements of another course, without the express permission of the instructor of the second course. This constitutes cheating as stated in the Academic Calendar.
 - Students do not have permission to upload course material to any external websites or share with others, unless expressly permitted to do so by the instructor. If you require further clarification about using materials from this course in other contexts, please contact the instructor.
 - Under no circumstances are students permitted to provide anyone not registered in this course with access to the Mount Online course site established for the course.

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The Mount Teaching and Learning Centre and Online Learning (2018). *Mount Saint Vincent University Course Outline Template*. Mount Saint Vincent University: Halifax, Nova Scotia. Template last revised March 2018.



Appendix A – Student Services

<p><u>Aboriginal Student Centre</u> 45 Melody Drive (902) 457-6228 aboriginalcentre@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The ASC strives to provide an opportunity to empower, encourage, and educate students of all nations in an environment rooted in Indigenous cultures and values. The ASC offers the opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal culture, while providing a place to study and hang out.</p>
<p><u>Academic Advising</u> Dean’s Office - Seton 302 (902) 457-6400 advising@msvu.ca</p>	<p>Our academic advisors are here to help you plan for success. Whether mapping out your degree or helping you choose a major, minor, or concentration, your academic advisors are available to help at any point along your journey.</p>
<p><u>Accessibility Services</u> EMF 127-G (902) 457-6567 accessibilityservices@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Mount’s Accessibility Services team is dedicated to adapting the academic environment for students who require accommodations to assist them in reaching their full academic potential.</p>
<p><u>Africentric Support Group</u> Evaristus C405 (902) 457-5547 africentricsupport@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The ASG works to infuse Africentricity into the educational experience of our Black student population. It offers students a safe space to meet new people, participate on campus, and learn more about themselves and others.</p>
<p><u>Career Services</u> McCain 306 (902) 457-6139 careerplanning@msvu.ca</p>	<p>We offer a variety of career-related services for students, employers and faculty. Whether you need help making a career decision, job searching, or are wondering what you can do with your degree, we can help you plan a realistic career path.</p>
<p><u>Counselling Services</u> EMF 127-G (902) 457-6567 counselling@msvu.ca</p>	<p>Our Counselling Services team provides free personal and academic counselling to any registered Mount student in a relaxed and confidential environment. Visit Oscar, the Mount’s therapy dog, every Thursday from 2-3 in the Library.</p>
<p><u>Financial Aid</u> Evaristus 207-E (902) 457-6351 financial.aid@msvu.ca</p>	<p>Our goal in the Financial Aid office is to make your educational journey a little easier to understand by directing you to the information you need. We can provide assistance with everything, from budgeting to bursaries!</p>
<p><u>Financial Services</u> Evaristus 206 & 211 (902) 457-6277 financial.services@msvu.ca</p>	<p>At the Mount, we recognize the challenges that students face when funding their education. That is why our tuition fees are among the lowest in NS. Don’t let a lack of financial resources stop you! There are many ways to help pay for your education, including scholarships, bursaries, and government loans.</p>
<p><u>Health Office</u> (902) 457-6354</p>	<p>The Health Office and its physicians are committed to treating all visitors with the respect and confidentiality expected from any health care professional.</p>
<p><u>International Education Centre</u> Seton Annex (902) 457-6488 international@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Mount’s International Education Centre offers personal, academic, cultural, and immigration advising to international students and any student or faculty wishing to study, research or conduct projects abroad. The IEC is also home to the university’s English as an Additional Language Programs.</p>

<p><u>IT&S Help Desk</u> EMF, 1st Floor (902) 457-6538 accessibilityservices@msvu.ca</p>	<p>There are many technology services available for students including Wi-Fi, student webmail with calendar, access to over 200 computers, as well as classrooms equipped with networked computers, video players, LCD projectors, and sound.</p>
<p><u>Learning Strategist</u> EMF 127-F (902) 457-6567 learning.strategist@msvu.ca</p>	<p>It is common for students to be surprised about academic expectations and the level of independent learning required in university. The Learning Strategist can help with managing time, getting organized, setting goals, study skills, and more!</p>
<p><u>Library</u> EMF (902) 457-6250 library@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Library’s team of dedicated staff are here to offer you quality public services and academic information resources designed to meet the teaching, learning, and research needs of the Mount Community.</p>
<p><u>Print Shop</u> Seton 330 (902) 457-6135 print.shop@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Mount Print Shop is a full-service, in-house print shop. We are dedicated to supporting faculty, staff, students, and the extended Mount community with high-quality, confidential, and expedited print services.</p>
<p><u>Registrar’s Office</u> Evaristus 204/207 (902) 457-6117 registration@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Registrar’s Office is involved in all aspects of academic life, including: admissions, enrolment, retention, exams, convocation, and academic policies. We are here to help guide you through your academic career.</p>
<p><u>Residence Life</u> Evaristus 201-A (902) 457-6356 rez.life@msvu.ca</p>	<p>Living in residence will add a whole new dimension to your university years! Apart from the convenience of living close to all campus resources, you will also have the opportunity to become more involved in campus life.</p>
<p><u>Writing Centre</u> EMF 205 (902) 457-6567 writing@msvu.ca</p>	<p>The Writing Centre offers bookable individual appointments with experienced tutors for help with all written assignments, such as presentations, slides, speeches, posters, and all aspects of paper writing.</p>