



Faculty of Professional Studies
Department of Communication Studies
PBRL 2288 (01) - Co-op Term II
Instructor – Ellen Shaffner
Course Outline for Fall 2023

| Course information | |
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| Section number: | PBRL 2288.01 |
| Course dates: | 6 September 2023 – 7 December 2023 |
| Co-op faculty advisor: | Ellen Shaffner |
| E-mail: | ellen.shaffner@msvu.ca |
| Telephone: | 902-457-6689 |
| Office hours: | By appointment |
| Prerequisite: | Completion of professional development program delivered by the Co-op office. Completion of courses prescribed by the Department of Communication Studies course sequence (PBRL 3012, 3013, 3014 and COMM 2016, 3023) 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.

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| Learning outcomes | <p>During this semester you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <p>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. <i>Please visit the course Moodle site regularly.</i></p> <p>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.</p> |
| Learning environment | <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this work term you will participate in a series of three synchronous discussions via collaborate or Teams. We will arrange the dates and times for these in the first two weeks of the term in September, 2023. • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; <i>do not do the work while you are in the workplace.</i> |

Anticipated timeline

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

I will be in touch at the beginning of the term to set up our discussion days/times for each month and explain what each monthly check-in entails.

Case study

On or before **Sunday, December 3**, you will complete and submit a case study of about 1500-2000 words (six to eight pages; not including contents, references or appendices) drawing 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 on our course moodle site. We will also 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

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| Name | Ellen Shaffner, BA Hons, MBA, PhD |
| 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: 902-457-6689 |
| 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

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| 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.

Department Writing Requirement Policy

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.

University Advisories

Scheduling Conflicts

If a student has a scheduling conflict with any aspect of the course, notably an assignment deadline or an examination, please contact your instructor in advance (1 week ahead) of the relevant deadline to request consideration for accommodation.

If a student has overlapping final exam times, a work commitment that cannot be changed, or is scheduled to write three exams in three consecutive writing times, an [Exam Conflict](#) form should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. Documentation may be required.

Accommodations

Students who have disability and who require academic accommodations must register with [Accessibility Services](#) as early as possible in order to receive accommodations.

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.

Course Material

This course may contain material that some may find disturbing and/or challenging to read, view or discuss. At any time in the course if you feel uncomfortable with the course material or discussions please contact your instructor

Use of Course Material

As a student in this course you should 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 expressed 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.

Only students registered in this Mount Online course site are permitted to view, download, upload, comment or otherwise participate in this course site.

Use of Language

Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Academic Integrity

You play a vital role in contributing 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 under Academic Offenses. It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with these regulations and consequences.

Research

Students who conduct research involving human participants must have their research reviewed in accordance with the [MSVU Policies and Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Participants](#) before starting the research. Check with your course professor or Chair of the Department about proper procedure.

Class Attendance

Regular attendance is expected of students at all classes; the Mount recognizes the significance of attendance by stating it in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Class Cancellations

Cancelled classes will be indicated on the class cancellation line at (902) 457-6566 and on the [website](#).

Online Class Recordings

Online classes held in Collaborate may be recorded and your image, voice, and name may be included in the recording. By remaining in the recorded session you are consenting to the creation of the recording and its use for educational purposes in the course it was created. Recorded classes will not be used outside the class context or for other purposes without consent.

Distance Student Examination

When an on-campus examination is scheduled in an online course, only students who reside 100km away or more from the Mount may write at an approved proctor site. Students must submit the [Proctor Site Request form](#) within

two weeks from the first day of the fall and winter terms and one week for summer session 1 and 2. For additional important information on finding and requesting an approved proctor, please see the Registrar's Office page on [Examinations](#).

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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 July 2020.



Appendix A – Student Services

Indigenous Student Centre (Kina'masuti aqq Apognamasuti)

45 Melody Drive
(902) 457-6228
aboriginalcentre@msvu.ca

The [Kina'masuti aqq Apognamasuti](#) (Learning and Help) Indigenous Student Centre strives to provide an opportunity to empower, encourage, and educate students of all nations in an environment rooted in Indigenous cultures and values, while providing a place to study and hang out.

Accessibility Services

Library, lower level, room 141
(902) 457-6567
accessibilityservices@msvu.ca

Our team supports over 500 students by promoting self-advocacy and an equitable learning environment. They are dedicated to adapting the academic environment. Some examples of disabilities we support include, physical and learning disabilities, medical conditions, vision and hearing loss, ADHD, and mental health.

Black Student Support

Seton 314
(902) 457-5547
blackstudentsupport@msvu.ca

Whether you are a Black student from Canada or an international destination, there will likely be times when you are in need of some support at the Mount. Our Black Student Support Advisor is here to help.

Career Services

McCain 312
(902) 457-6567
counselling@msvu.ca

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.

Centre for Academic Advising & Student Success

Seton 303

[\(902\) 457-6657](tel:(902)457-6657)
advising@msvu.ca

A centralized location where academic advisors, the Mount 101 coordinator and peer mentors are available to provide academic support to undergraduate students. Equipped with workstations, the Centre is a hub for advising activities and academic support programs on campus.

[Counselling Services](#)

Library, lower level, room 141
(902) 457-6567
counselling@msvu.ca

Our Counselling Services team provides free personal counselling to any registered Mount student in a relaxed and confidential environment. We have a number of services available so that the needs of each student are addressed by highly skilled and professional staff.

[Financial Aid](#)

Evaristus 207-K
(902) 457-6351
financial.aid@msvu.ca

We are dedicated to helping students reduce their financial barriers to a high quality, post-secondary education by assisting with everything from budgeting to bursaries and scholarships. We can provide support and direction to all of the information you need!

[Financial Services](#)

Evaristus 206 & 211
(902) 457-6277
financial.services@msvu.ca

You've likely discovered that paying for your education will be the first major financial decision you will make. It doesn't have to be overwhelming. The Mount is one of the most affordable places to get an education, and we've helped many students figure out a way.

[International Education Centre](#)

Seton Annex
(902) 457-5982
international@msvu.ca

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.

[IT&S Help Desk](#)

Library, lower level, room 106
(902) 457-6538
helpdesk@msvu.ca

There are many technology services available to assist you with your studies, including, Wi-Fi, access to over 200 computers, and fully equipped classrooms for your presentation needs. With Office 365 you can access your email, calendar and 1TB OneDrive storage.

[Learning Strategist](#)

Seton 346
(902) 457-6358
learning.strategist@msvu.ca

The university experience is one full of excitement, challenges and changes. The Mount's Learning Strategist can recommend strategies to become a more effective learner. They can help with managing time, getting organized, setting goals, study skills, and more!

Library

E. Margaret Fulton Building (EMF)
(902) 457-6250
library@msvu.ca

Whether on campus or online, we have the scholarly content to assist you with your research and coursework. The dedicated team of library staff take pride in offering quality services and academic resources to meet the teaching, learning and research needs of the Mount community.

Mount 101

Evaristus 201-D
(902) 457-5511
mount101@msvu.ca

Your survival guide for your first year at the Mount. The online program and your Mount Mentor will help you find your success! Visit msvu.ca/mount101 for more information.

Print Shop

Seton 315
(902) 457-6135
print.shop@msvu.ca

The Mount Print Shop is a dedicated resource supporting the Mount community with high-quality, confidential and expedited print services. We maintain industry leading standards in all products and services. Contact us for a quote on your next project.

Registrar's Office

Evaristus 204 & 207
(902) 457-6117
registration@msvu.ca

The Registrar's Office staff are here to assist you from initial inquiry for admission through to the proud day you graduate. We are involved in all aspects of academic life, including: admissions, enrolment, retention, exams, convocation, and academic policies.

Residence Life

Evaristus 201-A
(902) 457-6356
residence@msvu.ca

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.

Student Health Services

Assisi Hall, second floor
(902) 457-6354

Student Health Services are committed to treating all patients with the highest level of respect and confidentiality. It is a convenient on-campus alternative for students who are unable to see their family doctor. Please visit the MSVU Student Health website for more info.

Writing Centre

Library, room 203
writing@msvu.ca

The Writing Centre offers appointments on weekdays and weekends as a free service for all Mount students, faculty, and staff. Experienced tutors help students with all academic written work – including, presentations, slides, speeches, and research papers.