

## PBRL 3388: Lessons Learned: A Reflective Seminar

### Introduction

The PBRL 3388 work term project will involve a series of reflective seminars presented to new public relations students preparing to go out on their first work term. For students completing their final work term in the fall semester, the seminars will take place in January following your work term. You will work in groups selected by the Co-op Office to include a combination of different workplace environments and will provide the audience of junior students with a reflective presentation of your various experiences.

You will need to reflect on your personal growth as both a student and a practitioner of public relations, using concrete examples to explain and support your thinking. This seminar will encourage you to look at your co-operative education experience as a whole and to consider what that experience has meant to you.

### Format

Working in your group, you will communicate with each other via email no later than November to organize how you will develop your presentation. Each session should be approximately one hour in length with a presentation length of approximately 45 minutes followed by 15 minutes of discussion time where your audience can ask you questions. (Note: You should develop some probing questions in order to help initiate this discussion.)

We suggest each presenter provide a brief overview of their co-op experience, including their three work terms. Your group should also explore some of the following topics:

- Did you have a strategy for choosing your co-op positions? If so, what was it?
- What is your advice for students who are nervous about interviews?
- What kinds of mentorship, networking, and/or professional development training did your employers provide during your work terms?
- What is the importance of building a professional network prior to graduation? How did you go about building your own professional network during co-op?
- What kinds of expectations did your employers have about the level of skills and supports you could provide on your work terms? Did you feel prepared to meet those expectations?
- How did co-op education influence your personal and professional development?
- How did you balance your coursework and co-op requirements?
- What were the benefits of relocating for a work term (if applicable)?

- What differences did you observe in how public relations is practiced across various sectors (government, corporate, not-for-profit, start-up, etc.)? What should students undertaking a co-op in these sectors know beforehand?
- What kinds of knowledge, skillsets, and/or technical capabilities do you think will be essential for the emerging PR professional to possess in the next 3-5 years?
- What is one sample of the work you completed during your work terms that you are most proud of? (Share and discuss why. Make sure there is diversity in the kinds of samples included by various group members.)
- How has your co-op experience enhanced your classroom experience and vice versa?
- What advice would you offer a first-time co-op student? What would you do differently?
- How did you cope with and overcome any uncertainties you may have felt during your work terms?
- After co-op, what is your analysis of the role(s) public relations can play in today's world?
- How has co-op assisted you in reaching your future career goals?

Students are encouraged to utilize technology to deliver a professional presentation. Handouts may also be considered but are not required. The Co-op Office can print presentation materials for you as long as the materials are supplied in an accessible format one week (7 business days) in advance of the presentation date.

Note: PBRL 3388 students who complete their work term out of sequence and/or finish their degree requirements on a work term may be assigned an alternative assignment by their faculty advisor consisting of a professional video version of this presentation on their own. Video presentations may be retained by the Co-op Office and shared on our website or other platforms with future co-op students. The same deadlines and grading rubric will apply to both the individual video and group presentation options.

## Evaluation

Your co-op faculty advisor will attend your group presentation along with co-op staff members and your audience of junior co-op students (or review your individual video presentation for out of sequence students or students ending on a work term). Your presentation will be evaluated by your co-op faculty advisor on the following criteria:

- A strong reflective component (not just a commentary of job duties).
- An informed analysis of PR as it is practiced in various workplace environments, and the adaptation required to adjust to different organizations.
- An error-free, well organized, and rehearsed presentation and audience discussion delivered using professional technology and/or materials.

Each individual involved in the presentation will also engage in critical assessment of their own preparation and participation as well as any other group members. Your audience may also be asked to evaluate your presentation in terms of its relevancy and usefulness.

## Timeline

- Second month of your co-op: Co-op Office will assign groups and your presentation time/date.

- Third month of your co-op: begin communicating with your group members to assign presentation duties.
- Fourth month of your co-op: **develop a presentation outline to be reviewed by your co-op faculty advisor.**
- Two weeks prior to presentation date: **share the final draft of your presentation with your co-op faculty advisor for review and implement any required changes.**
- First month following the end of your final work term: deliver your presentation at the time/date previously communicated by the Co-op Office.

## Planning Notes

- Await confirmation from the Co-op Office regarding who your group members will be.
- Await confirmation from the Co-op Office regarding the time and date of your presentation.
- Review the work term project guidelines before you begin planning your presentation to ensure you will meet the requirements.
- Keep in mind that your presentation is not intended to be an informal panel chat about your co-op experiences. It should be a professional presentation that addresses how a new co-op student can get the best educational experience possible out of the co-operative education program from those who have reflected on both the positives and negatives of their own co-op journeys. Plan your presentation in the same way you might approach making a pitch to a potential client, considering overarching themes and presentation structure.
- Email the final draft of your presentation to your co-op faculty advisor two weeks prior to your presentation date. This is to ensure presentations meet the project guidelines and are error-free.
- Consider what presentation materials you may need, including handouts, uploading the presentation onto a USB, and name tags for group participants. Again, you may contact the Co-op Office for assistance with photocopying or printing as long as you do so one week or more in advance of the presentation date.
- Elements of your presentation may be recorded or retained for evaluation and promotional purposes.

# Grading Rubric

Criteria	No Evidence	Needs Improvement	Meets Expectations
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Element not included or no opportunity to observe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers a narrow range of topics from individual student learning to the practice of public relations</li> <li>Few specific examples to illustrate points</li> <li>Merely describes co-op experiences without reflecting on or contextualizing them</li> <li>Typographical or grammatical errors present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers a wide range of relevant topics from life-long learning to the relationship between classroom and workplace learning</li> <li>Specific examples and good anecdotes to illustrate points</li> <li>Reflects and contextualizes on co-op experiences</li> <li>Free of typographical or grammatical errors</li> </ul>
Section Comments:			
<b>Presentation structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Element not included or no opportunity to observe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive content</li> <li>No logical progression</li> <li>Topics covered in a haphazard way</li> <li>Poor distribution of presentation areas between group members</li> <li>Disorganized or lack of discussion period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good diversity of examples</li> <li>Clear and logical progression</li> <li>Effective transitions</li> <li>Good use of all group members</li> <li>Proactive efforts to foster discussion with audience members</li> </ul>
Section Comments:			
<b>Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Element not included or no opportunity to observe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizes basic presentation material templates which are clunky, illegible, and/or over wordy</li> <li>Incomplete or irrelevant answers to audience questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizes technology and design knowledge to create clean, visually appealing, and easy to read presentation materials</li> <li>Well-rounded and engaging answers to audience questions</li> </ul>

Section Comments:

<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Element not included or no opportunity to observe</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation lacks energy and discourages audience participation</li><li>• Difficult to hear</li><li>• Reads content off slides without looking up at audience</li><li>• Poor posture</li><li>• Lack of eye contact</li><li>• Distracting mannerisms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation is engaging and commands audience's attention</li><li>• Good projection and vocal variety</li><li>• Presentation is memorized or read in an engaging way</li><li>• Relaxed but alert posture</li><li>• Good use of facial expressions and natural gestures to maintain interest</li></ul>
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Section Comments:

<b>Time management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Element not included or no opportunity to observe</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation well under an hour</li><li>• Presentation rushed through due to time constraints</li><li>• Poor balance between presentation and discussion time</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Content organized to make good use of time available</li><li>• Good blend of presentation and discussion time</li></ul>
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Section Comments:

Final Comments:

## Self/Peer Assessment

1. I/my group members dedicated sufficient preparation time to the presentation:
  - a. Strongly Agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly Disagree
  
2. I/my group members contributed an equal amount of effort to the presentation:
  - a. Strongly Agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly Disagree
  
3. I/my group members followed the project guidelines while developing the presentation:
  - a. Strongly Agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly Disagree
  
4. I/my group members were easy to contact and communicate with prior to the presentation:
  - a. Strongly Agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly Disagree
  
5. I/my group members were organized and engaging on the day of the presentation:
  - a. Strongly Agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly Disagree