

First and foremost, we were not sure what to expect when we enrolled in a public relations writing class. From the jump, we realized we had made a great decision when Professor Campi introduced the client-based service-learning experience. She told us from the start that we would be treated like professionals, and she meant it. That immediately set the tone, giving us a realistic feel for what it's like to work in a firm with clients, deadlines, and a supervisor. Being assigned a real-world client was intimidating at first, but as our team began unpacking their wants and needs, we quickly saw the long-lasting benefits. This class mirrored exactly what a comprehensive PR or marketing project looks like in the workforce: being placed with a client based on interests and strengths, relying on team communication, and meeting deadlines that function as real contractual expectations. Some clients communicate frequently, others barely at all, and you adapt to both. They tell you what they want, the team develops a plan for approval, and then you deliver. That is the exact process we followed this semester, and it made the experience feel about as real as it gets in an undergraduate class.

Looking at the semester as a whole, the experience was incredibly valuable. Getting the chance to work in a true real-world scenario with real clients is something many students in the United States don't get. The most valuable part of this project was learning how to actually get started with a client, how to prepare, how to ask the right questions, and how to structure the relationship. We were given both the tools and the creative freedom to set up meetings, collaborate as a team, and build a strategy from scratch. Professor Campi's lectures and activities prepared us well for the initial meeting by showing us the importance of researching ahead of time and uncovering the client's real needs. Understanding how to walk into that first face-to-face meeting confidently is a skill many people only learn through trial and error, which is why we felt it was one of the most impactful takeaways of the entire project.

Our client serves a very small portion of the student body, but the students involved are extremely dedicated. Because of that, we had to make visibility our main priority, especially for new students or those trying to fulfill language requirements quickly. On top of that, our client didn't need to meet with us as often as some of the others, which initially worried us. Instead of letting that hold us back, we used it as an opportunity to take creative initiative and build deliverables and portfolio pieces we knew would be effective.

In the end, the obstacles we faced connected directly to our biggest wins for the GSLL Department. Our plan centered on creating buzz by highlighting that many courses are taught in English, which helps reduce the intimidation students may feel. We also targeted students looking to complete language requirements efficiently. But our biggest win was securing a real student testimonial from one of Audrey's coworkers. That element strengthened our portfolio in a meaningful way and felt like the perfect culmination of our team's efforts.