

The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Communication
COMM 3321: Public Relations
Fall 2014

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Office hours:
MW 11:00-1:00 PM
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Or by appointment

Class meeting times:
TR 12:00– 1:20 PM
Location: HUDS 300

Course Description:

This course explores the different concepts and techniques used in public relations. The content is designed with the goal of developing a thorough understanding of the different principles and methods utilized in developing and implementing strategic public relations plans to achieve business/organizational goals.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Understand the role that public relations plays in different types of organizations
- Understand the core functions involved in strategic public relations planning (research, analysis, communication, evaluation)
- Create a strategic public relations plan
- Develop time-management, teamwork and strategic planning skills, as these are an integral part of the public relations field.

Course Methodology:

- There will be a mix of lectures, student group assignments and presentations.
- Students will participate in diverse class exercises that will attempt to recreate “real-world” professional situations.
- By the end of the semester students will be required to demonstrate the skills and knowledge learned through the entire course by developing and presenting a comprehensive PR campaign.

Learning Outcome:

- Competence in identifying and understanding the basic structure of strategic public relations practices (research, analysis, communication, evaluation)

Outcome Assessment/Grading:

- Students will demonstrate their skills and knowledge by successfully fulfilling the PR assignments required to pass this course.

Materials and bibliography:

Required textbooks:

- 1) Dennis L. Wilcox, Glen T. Cameron, Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. 10th edition, Allyn & Bacon publishers
- 2) Barbara Diggs-Brown, The PR Styleguide: Formats for Public Relations Practice, Wadsworth Publishing

Grading:

This course is ambitious and requires your active participation. You will be working in teams. However you will be graded individually based on the quality of the work you submit and your contribution to the overall group assignment.

Students can earn up to 1000 points during the semester. Grades will be based on the following scale:

All turned-in assignments must be hard copy. No e-mails accepted.

A= 1000-900 points
B= 899-800 points
C= 799-700 points
D= 600-699 points
F= 599 points and below

• PR Firm Introductory Presentation	100 points
• Situational Analysis Report and Presentation	200 points
• Communication Strategies Report and Presentation	200 points
• Final Comprehensive PR Project	400 points
▪ <i>Written Project (Campaign Plan Book)</i>	<i>200 points</i>
▪ <i>Client Presentation</i>	<i>200 points</i>
• Class Attendance & Participation	100 points
Total possible points	1000 points

PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend each and every class and to be punctual. This is a discussion driven course, your active participation is extremely important. Please read assigned material prior to class. **I will deduct 10 points** from your class participation score for each **unexcused absence** or each time you are asked to participate **in class discussions and you are not prepared to do so.**

GROUP PROJECTS

The course will require you to work in teams to “create” a PR Firm.

Each PR Firm will develop a “Strategic PR Campaign Plan” and will compete with other assigned class PR Firms to “win” a specific client account. The possible points that each PR Firm can earn will be based on the proper fulfillment of the following assignments:

1) PR FIRM INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION (100 POINTS)

Each team will deliver an 8 min presentation, in which they will introduce their PR Firm to the audience by explaining:

- Firm’s name and identity
- Mission
- Staff expertise and how it relates to PR.

2) SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT AND PRESENTATION (200 points)

This is the first major component of your PR campaign. You will discover the facts crucial to the campaign about your client's organization, the industry in which it operates, and about the "situation" which necessitates a public relations campaign. For your 10 page written assignment, as well as your 10 min. presentation you will discuss:

- Introduction (purpose of the document)
- Organization's Business Objectives
- Organization's Product /Service Issues
- Industry Trends
- Competitive Facts
- Customer facts (target audiences)
- Role of PR
- SWOT Analysis
- Discussion
- Conclusion

3) COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES REPORT AND PRESENTATION (200 points)

This is the second major component of your PR Campaign. Based on your situational analysis. You will develop campaign objectives, communication strategies and communication tactics for your client's PR campaign. Select from the several publics the most important audiences to be reached in order to "solve" the organizational problem.

Select and develop the 'best' strategy to achieve the objective(s) with the selected publics. Determine a unifying theme for all messages, events, etc. Design the messages, events, and etc.- including spokesperson. Select and/or design the media for carrying messages, including graphics, drawings, storyboards, press releases, etc., as appropriate.

For your 10 page (min.) written assignment, as well as your 10 min. presentation you will discuss:

- Introduction (purpose of the document)
- Campaign Objectives

- Communication Strategies

- Communication Tactics

1 Traditional Media Strategies

- A) Print
- B) Radio
- C) TV
- D) WEB

2 Traditional Media Promotion Efforts

- A) TV (PSA)
- B) Radio (PSA)

3 Interactive Media

- A) Web
- B) Social Media Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc)
- C) Podcasts

4 Non-Traditional Media Channels

4.1 Special (Triggering) Events

- A) Community Events
 - B) Sponsorship Events
 - C) Specialized Events
- 4.2 Internal Communications
- A) Employee Events
 - B) Newsletters
 - C) Bulletin Boards

- Conclusion

4) COMPREHENSIVE PR CAMPAIGN PLAN BOOK AND CLIENT PRESENTATION (400 points)

A) PR Campaign Plan Book/ (200 points)

This will be the final written document you will submit to your client. Your “PR Campaign Plan book” will include a revised and updated version of your situational analysis and communication strategies report (including samples of PR communication tools). In addition, you will

- Develop a calendar that structures the campaign including media deadlines.
- Develop a (realistic) budget for each objective (including message placement, production cost, printing and labor).
- Develop evaluation efforts in which you will:
 - a. Determine quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting "effectiveness" data during the campaign
 - b. Plan for the organization's analysis and interpretation of the data

When completed, the project should be at least 20 typewritten, double spaced pages (not including charts, graphs, calendars or sample public relations tools).

B) Client Presentation/(200 Points)

A 20-minute formal oral presentation to the class and your client during the final week of the semester is also part of the grade. This presentation should showcase your creativity, talent and serve as a “selling” tool to win the client’s account.

Competitive factor: The campaign that gets selected by the client, will earn an extra 100 points.!!!

Your responsibilities:

- All written assignments must be **hard copy** (no e-mails accepted) and handed in **on time**, double-spaced and have adequate margins for reviewer comments (about an inch). Use 12-point type, Times New Roman or Courier font.
- Deadlines for all written assignments will be strictly enforced. I won’t accept assignments after deadline. Missing a deadline is equivalent of not doing the assignment. PR professionals must meet strict deadlines. I expect you to do the same.
- Students are expected to attend each and every class and to be punctual. As mentioned earlier, class participation will also be scored from 1 to 100. I will deduct 10 points from your class participation score for each absence.

- Show respect. The use of cell phones and text messages won't be allowed during class time. Please turn cell phones off before entering the classroom. Be courteous to classmates by paying attention to presentations and by being open-minded in regard to the opinions and ideas of others

Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism, cheating or collusion is a violation of the norms and ethics of the academic community. Anyone suspected of academic dishonesty will immediately be reported to the Chair of the Department of Communication and to the Dean of Student Affairs. Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Disability Policy:

If you have been identified as having disability, please see the instructor to make proper arrangements.

Tentative Course Schedule (Subject to change depending on the needs of the class)

Class Meeting	Topic—Activity	Reading
T/AUG/26	Course Introduction, Student Introduction	
R/AUG/28	What is Public Relations?	Wilcox Ch. 1
T/SEP/2	PR Departments and Firms	Wilcox Ch. 4
R/SEP/4	Ethics and Professionalism	Wilcox Ch. 3
T/SEP/9	PR Workshop Introductory Presentation	
R/SEP/11	Program Planning	
T/SEP/16	PR FIRM INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION	
R/SEP/18	PR Research	Wilcox Ch. 5
T/SEP/23	PR New technologies	Wilcox Ch. 13
R/SEP/25	PR Workshop Situational Analysis	

Class Meeting	Topic—Activity	Reading
T/OCT/30	Conflict Management	Wilcox Ch. 10
R/OCT/2	Crisis Communication	Wilcox Ch. 7
T/OCT/7	Public Opinion and Persuasion	
R/OCT/9	SITUATION ANALYSIS REPORT AND PRESENTATION	
T/OCT/14	SITUATION ANALYSIS REPORT AND PRESENTATION	
R/OCT/16	Communication Strategies / Program Planning	Wilcox Ch.6
T/OCT/21	Client Interview Session	
R/OCT/23	Client Interview Session	
T/OCT/28	News Releases, Media Alerts and Pitch Letters	Wilcox Ch. 14
R/OCT/30	Radio, TV	Wilcox Ch. 15
T/NOV/4	Social Media	Class Lecture
R/NOV/6	COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES REPORT AND PRESENTATION	
T/NOV/11	COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES REPORT AND PRESENTATION	
R/NOV/13	Evaluation	Wilcox Ch. 8
T/NOV/18	Nonprofit Organizations	Wilcox Ch. 21
R/NOV/20	Global PR	Wilcox Ch. 20
T/NOV/25	PR Workshop Final Presentation	

Class Meeting	Topic—Activity	Reading
T/DEC/2	PR CAMPAIGN PLAN BOOK DUE (ALL CLIENTS) & Dress Rehearsal	
R/DEC/4	Dress Rehearsal	
T/DEC/9	PR CAMPAIGN FINAL PRESENTATION 1:00-3:45 PM	

