

The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Communication
Spring 2019
COMM 4323: Case Studies in Public Relations
CRN 24664

MATERIALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *Cases in Public Relations Management* by Patricia Swan, 2nd Edition
Routledge (2014)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Instructor: MBA/MA Eli Garcia
Office: COTTON 204
Office hours: M-W 12:00-1:20 PM
 T-R 3:30-4:30 PM
 Or by appointment

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COURSE CONTENT

Course Description:

This course studies the role of public relations in organizational problem-solving practices. Through the analysis of real-life cases you will study how the functions of public relations help manage and reconcile the conflicts/challenges that arise between an organization and its diverse stakeholders.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Understand the role that public relations plays in effectively developing advancing and managing successful strategic relationships between an organization and its diverse publics
- Implement the *Case-Based* methodology to analyze how a wide range of organizations have used strategic PR plans to handle conflicts and meet organizational goals
- Advance strategic thinking and problem-solving skills
- Develop counseling, time-management, teamwork and strategic planning skills, as these are an integral part of the public relations field.

Course Learning Outcome:

- Competence in applying the *Case-Based* methodology to different organizational situations in which strategic PR plans are utilized to achieve organizational goals

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

- As in any “real-world” PR situation, this course will require you to work in teams.
- Your team will explore a series of public relations campaigns/situations.
- Based on your analysis of the mentioned situations your team will report and present your research findings in the following structure:
 - 1 Written mini-case study analysis
 - 1 Communication theory presentation
 - 4 Written full case study analyses
 - 1 Full case study discussion leading presentation
 - 1 Final case analysis written report (rubric provided on day of final assignment)

Mini- Case Study Written Report:

Read the case study, "Zombies Gone Viral: How a Fictional Zombie Invasion Helped CDC Promote Emergency Preparedness" Based on the case study, write a written report that covers all sections in the following rubric:

PR Case Study Rubric Written Assignment	100 Total Possible Points
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overview of the PR concepts that will be discussed in your document. • Provide a Justification on why your document is relevant to PR practitioners, • Describe what specific organizational communication knowledge a PR practitioner will obtain from your document. 	10 Points
Case Background Give a short summary of the situation (cited in APA style) Identify key players in the case study: organizations, executives, media outlets, etc.	10 points
Problem/Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain Problem and/or Opportunity that the case presents for all key players mentioned in the previous section. 	10 points
Case Analysis (Answers to Case Questions at the end of reading)	30 points
Critique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overall critique on how the organization reacted to this case • Describe PR successes and failures 	20 points
Best Practices conclusion What did you learn from this case? From a <i>Best Practices</i> approach, what would be your 4 <i>Best Practice</i> recommendations for public relations professionals?	20 points

Communication Theory Presentation

Guidelines.

- For this assignment you will conduct secondary research on the specific theory assigned to your team during class.
- The objective of this exercise is to get acquainted with diverse theoretical frameworks used in a wide range of PR practices.
- Most of the theories can be applied to an extensive set of disciplines; make sure your analysis is conducted from a communication-oriented perspective.
- **Appendix C (pg. 559)** in your textbook (**Swan**) provides a condensed summary on several theories. You can use this reference as a **starting point** for your research. Then refer to the diverse electronic databases available at the UTEP library.

For your presentation (15 mins max.) please follow the following rubric

Concept	Possible Points 150 Points
Introduction: Provide an introduction to your presentation. Give an overview of the material you will discuss	20
Theory definition/description: Provide both the formal definition of theory , as well as your team's interpretation of it	30
Theory background: Provide historical background , include disciplinary context and any additional relevant information on the creator/proponents of this theory	30
PR campaign contemporary application: Present two examples where you can identify this theory being implemented in "real-life" communication/PR scenarios.	35
Conclusion: Conclude your presentation by sharing with your audience what you learned from this research exercise. Explain how your research findings can make you a more competitive PR professional.	35

Note: Don't forget to cite your sources during your presentation and include relevant visual aids.

Have fun!

Full Case Study Written Assignment Criteria:

- Your team written reports should be around 8-10 pages.
- They should demonstrate an in-depth written analysis-critique of the assigned case.
- Make sure you answer the required questions in paragraph format.
- Please follow APA style and provide a reference page

Case Study Rubric Written Assignment	100 Points
<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overview of the PR concepts that will be discussed in your document. • Provide a justification on why your document is relevant to PR practitioners. • Describe what specific organizational communication knowledge will a PR practitioner obtain from your document. 	5
<p>Organizational Profile (Key Players) (External research) Provide an organizational profile of all parties involved in the case based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Organizational Culture • Organizational structure • PR history (previous approaches to PR, crises, successful campaigns, etc.) • Overall PR approach 	10
<p>Case summary- Problems/Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the situation. • Provide a SWOT Analysis for all parties involved • Explain PR problems and/or opportunities for <u>all parties involved</u>. 	10
<p>Organization's Communication Objectives: Identify the communication objectives for all main players</p>	5
<p>Public Opinion Review: (Internet, newspapers, TV, radio, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overview of the media coverage the case received. • Identify the main media players and describe their influence on public opinion • Provide your opinion on who had a positive/negative portrayal based on media coverage 	20
<p>Case Analysis (Answers to Case Questions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you provide your answers from a PR perspective 	20
<p>Critique.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overall critique on how the organization reacted to this case and conclude your document. Use diverse codes of ethics presented in class as point of reference. • Describe PR successes and failures 	15
<p>Best Practices conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn from this case? <p>From a <i>Best Practices</i> approach, what would be your 4 PR <i>Best Practice</i> recommendations for business professionals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Relations • Internal Communication • Community Relations • CSR, etc. 	15

Full Case Study Presentation Criteria:

- You will be assigned to present and lead the discussion on one of the written case analyses
- Make sure you have a well-developed presentation plan
- Make sure you cover the points discussed in the different sections of the written assignment
- Be prepared to engage the audience, facilitate discussions and answer direct questions.
- Use strong and interesting visual aids (Power point, posters, videos, etc.)

Case Study Presentation	150 Total Possible Points
Organizational Background Information	10 points
Case Background	10 points
Problem /Opportunity	10 points
Public Opinion (Media coverage samples)	20 points
Case Analysis Discussion (discussion of answers to case questions)	25 points
Critique	20points
Best Practice Conclusion	20 Points
Interaction with audience (engagement, questions, etc.)	25 points
Visual elements	10 points

GRADING

This course is ambitious and requires your active participation. 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

Mini case study report.....	100 Points
Communication Theory Team presentation	150 Points
Full Case Study #1 (Written Assignment)	100 Points
Full Case Study #2 (Written Assignment)	100 Points
Full Case Study #3 (Written Assignment)	100 Points
Full Case Study #4 (Written Assignment)	100 Points
Final Case Study #5 (Written Assignment).....	100 Points
Case Study Formal Presentation.....	150 Points
Attendance and Participation.....	100 Points

Total Points _____
1000 Points

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Participation and 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**.

Deadlines and late work

- 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

Be respectful:

- The use of cell phones and text messages won't be allowed during class time. Please turn cell phones to silent mode 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 MISCONDUCT

- The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

CASS POLICY

- If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu. Or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities

COURSE CALENDAR

The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes in the schedule/calendar/assignments depending on the needs of the class.

Class Meeting	Topic—Activity	Reading
W/Jan/23	Course Introduction, Syllabus Review, Student Introductions	
M/Jan/28	Purpose of Public Relations cont.	Ch1
W/Jan/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics • What would you do? Scenarios • Creation of teams 	Ch. 2, & Appendix G pg. 575
M/Feb/4	Mini Case study workshop	
W/Feb/6	Mini Case study written report due “Zombies Gone Viral” (in class hand out) by 5:00 PM	All teams submit written report
M/Feb/11	Communication Theories Workshop	
W/Feb/13	Communication Theories Workshop	
M/Feb/18	Communication Theories Team Presentations Due (15 mins Max)	All teams present
W/Feb/20	Media Relations cont. Case Study Rubric Explanation	Ch4.
M/Feb/25	Community Relations	Ch.9
W/Feb/27	Corporate Social Responsibility cont.	Ch3
M/Mar/4	Full Case Study #1 written report and presentation due: “Two Employees with a Video Camera...” pg. 144 (All teams)	Team #1 Full Case Study presentation
W/Mar/6	CSR /Starbucks Case Study	Ch. 3
M/Mar/11	Starbucks Case study (In class exercise)	
W/Mar/13	Entertainment, Leisure and Sports	Ch. 8

Mar/18- Mar/20	Spring Break , No classes!	
M/Mar/25	Branding	In class notes
W/Mar/27	Branding	In class notes
M/Apr/1	Full Case Study #2: written report and presentation due: “Apple i-Problem; Subcontractor Worker Issues brings Negative Attention” pg. 66 (All teams)	Team #2 Full Case Study Presentation
W/Apr/3	Financial relations	Ch. 11
M/Apr/8	Consumer Relations	Ch. 7
W/Apr/10	Consumer Relations Cont.	Ch.7
M/Apr/15	Full Case study #3 Written report and presentation due: Undercover Video Captures Chicken abuse: Animal Activist Group Targets Company” pg. 266 (All teams)	Team #3 Full Case Study Presentation
W/Apr/17	Public Relations Career	In class discussion
M/Apr/22	Public Relations Careers	In class discussion
W/Apr/24	Culture and Other Considerations	Ch. 10
M/Apr/29	Culture and Other Considerations Cont.	Ch. 10
W/May/1	Full Case Study #4 written report and presentation due: “Shark Fin Soup: Hong Kong Disneyland” pg. 521 (All teams)	Team #4 Full case Study Presentation
M/May/6	Conflict Management	Ch.5
W/May/8	Conflict Management Cont.	Ch. 5
F/ May/17	Final Case Study Final Presentation PR Application Case Study All teams 10:00 AM-12:45 PM	All teams Written report and presentation