

The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Communication

**COMM 4350: Independent Study,
Case Studies in Public Relations
Summer 2015**

Instructor: MBA/MA Eli Garcia

Email: egarcia11@utep.edu

Phone: (915) 747- 5310

Office: Cotton 205

Office hours: Fridays 10:30 AM-1:00 PM

Course Description:

This independent study course explores 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 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 and strategic planning skills, as these are an integral part of the public relations field.

Course Methodology:

Independent Study

Learning Outcome:

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

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 textbook:

Cases in Public Relations Management by Patricia Swan, second edition
Routledge (2014)

Grading:

This course is ambitious and requires your active participation. However you will be graded based on the quality of the work you submit.

- Case Study #1 (Written Assignment & presentation)250 Points**
- Case Study #2 (Written Assignment & presentation)250 Points**
- Case Study #3 (Written Assignment & presentation)250 Points**
- Case Study #4 (Written Assignment & presentation)250 Points**

1000 Points

Your responsibilities:

- All written assignments must be **hard copy** (no e-mails accepted), 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 and presentations 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.

Case Study Written Assignment Criteria:

- Your written assignments 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.

PR Case Study Rubric Written Assignment	150 Total Possible Points
Organizational & Case Background (External research, provide a general organizational profile of all parties involved in the case: Basic facts, history, organizational culture, relevant factors in their environment, organizational model, etc.)	15 Points
Problem/Opportunity (Explain Problem or Opportunity that the case present for all parties involved)	15 Points
Environmental Scanning (Internet, newspapers, TV, radio, social media, etc) Provide an overview of the media coverage the case received. Analyze the narrative of media coverage. Give your opinion on its influence for all parties involved. Please provide a portfolio of news articles, video links, etc.	20 Points
Case Analysis (Answers to Case Questions)	80 Points
Critique and Conclusion. Provide an overall critique on how the organization reacted to this case and conclude your document.	20 points

Case Study Presentation Criteria:

- You will be assigned to present your written case analysis
- 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 discussion and answer direct questions.
- Use strong and interesting visual aids (Power point, posters, videos, etc)

Case Study Presentations	100 Total Possible Points
Background Information	10points
Problem/Opportunity	10 points
Environmental Scanning (Media coverage samples)	10 points
Case Analysis Discussion (discussion of answers to case questions)	30 points
Critique and Conclusion	10 points
Interaction with audience (engagement, questions, etc.)	20 points
Visual elements	10 points

Calendar:

Case Study #1: Friday June 12th, 9:00AM, “Apple *iproblem...*” pg. 66

Case Study #2: Friday June 19th, 9:00AM, “Two employees with a video camera...” pg. 144

Case Study #3: Friday June 25 17th, 9:00 AM, “*Deepwater Horizon...*” pg. 202

Case Study #4: Thursday July 2nd, 12 (noon), “Disney Honk Kong” Pg. 521

Have a great learning experience!