

COMM 3321, (CRN 11503):  
Public Relations

Fall 2016                      T, R 10:20-11:50 a.m.                      Liberal Arts Building, 207

Instructor: Lauren Macias-Cervantes

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Office Hours: M, W: 11a.m.-1p.m., F: 10a.m.-Noon or by appointment

**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.

**Required Materials, textbook:**

- Dennis L. Wilcox, Glen T. Cameron, Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. 10th or 11<sup>th</sup> edition, Allyn & Bacon publishers
- Barbara Diggs-Brown, The PR Styleguide: Formats for Public Relations Practice, Wadsworth Publishing

**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)
- Competence in creating a strategic public relations plan

**Outcome Assessment/Grading:**

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

**Grading:**

This course is ambitious and requires your active participation. Students can earn up to 1000 points during the semester.

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

Grades will be based on the following scale:

- 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
  - Written Project (Campaign Plan Book)
  - Client Presentations
- Class Attendance & Participation 100 points

Total possible points: 1000

**Class participation:**

It is expected that students read the assigned material ahead of the coordinating class time and be ready to discuss chapter topic. Participation in class discussions is not optional. Be courteous to classmates by paying attention to presentations, questions and comments. Be open-minded in regard to the opinions and ideas of others.

**Your responsibilities for the course:**

- All written assignments can be hard copy or electronic, but MUST be turned in on time. Use 12-point type, Times New Roman, Verdana, Tahoma or Arial font.
- Deadlines for all assignments will be strictly enforced. I won't accept assignments after deadline. Missing a deadline is equivalent of not doing the assignment. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for assignments due.
- Students are expected to attend each and every class and to be punctual.
- Respect is expected. 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. My biggest pet peeve is having someone in class that is "not present". Please pay attention in class.

**Late Work Policy:**

Late work will not be accepted except as arranged with the instructor on an individual basis and for serious reasons. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with assigned reading, activities and exams. Due dates are firm.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism & Cheating WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

If you need help writing, please visit the staff at the university writing center.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses. 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.

Plagiarism consists of submitting someone else's work, thoughts or ideas as your own without giving proper credit to the source. Cheating consists of obtaining information from someone other than the instructor during an exam. Most cases of plagiarism are the result of incorrectly referencing and/or citing sources in research papers. Do not be a victim of ignorance. There are too many reference resources to help you avoid this embarrassing situation.

**Disability Statement (American with/Disabilities Act [ADA])**

UTEP offers a variety of services to persons with documented sensory, mental, physical, or temporary disabling conditions to promote success in classes. If you have a disability and believe you may need services, you are encouraged to contact the Center for Students with Disabilities to discuss your needs with a counselor. All discussions and documentation are kept confidential.

**Tentative Course Schedule Attached.**

*(Instructor reserves the right to change the class schedule depending on the needs of the class and external factors.)*

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**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 Planbook" 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!!*

# August

2016

COMM 3321

T, R 10:30-11:50 a.m.

Public Relations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Fall semester begins Class introductions, syllabus overview	24	25 Chapter 1: What is Public Relations?	26	27
28	29	30 Chapter 2: The Evolution of Public Relations	31			

# September

2016

COMM 3321 T, R 10:30- 11:50 a.m. Public Relations						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Chapter 3: Ethics and Professionalism	2	3
4	5 Labor Day Holiday, No Class	6 Ch. 4: Public Relations Departments and Firms	7 Fall Census Day	8 Chapter 5: Research	9	10
11	12	13 [PR Firm Intro Presentations] Chapter 6: Program Planning	14	15 Chapter 7: Communication/ Ch. 8: Evaluation	16	17
18	19	20 Client Presentations	21	22 Chapter 9: Public Opinion and Persuasion	23	24
25	26	27 Case Study: YISD	28	29 Chapter 10: Conflict Management	30	



# October

2016

COMM 3321

T, R 10:30- 11:50 a.m.

Public Relations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 <b>Client Sessions</b>	5	6 Ch. 11: Reaching Diverse Audiences	7	8
9	10	11 <b>[Situational Analysis Report &amp; Presentations]</b>	12	13 <b>[Situational Analysis Report &amp; Presentations]</b>	14	15
16	17	18 Ch. 12: Public Relations and the Law /Ch. 13: The Internet and Social Media	19	20 <b>The Legal Perspective</b>	21	22
23	24	25 Ch. 14: Preparing Materials for Mass Media	26	27 Chapter 15: Radio and Television	28 <b>Fall Drop/Withdrawal Deadline</b>	29
30	31					

# November

2016

COMM 3321

T, R 10:30-11:50 a.m.

Public Relations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 [Communication Strategies Report and Presentations]	2	3 [Communication Strategies Report and Presentations]	4	5
6	7	8 Chapter 16: Meetings and Events	9	10 Chapter 17: Corporations	11	12
13	14	15 Ch. 18: Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism	16	17 Ch. 21: Nonprofit, Health, and Education	18	19
20	21	22 Ch. 19: Politics and Government / Ch. 20: Global Public Relations	23	24 Thanksgiving Holiday No Class	25 Thanksgiving Holiday No Class	26
27	28	29 [PR Plan Books Due & Dress Rehearsal]	30			

# December

2016

COMM 3321

T, R 10:30-11:50 a.m.

Public Relations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Fall Last Class Day <b>Dress Rehearsal</b>	2 Fall Dead Day	3
4	5	6	7	8 <b>Final Client Presentations</b> 10 a.m.- 12:45 p.m.	9	10 Fall Commencement
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31