

COM 351 - Public Relations (4 credits)
Dr. Tamara Gillis
206G Steinman Center
Office: 361-1386

2:00 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays
S101
Fall 2009

Prerequisites: English professional writing, COM 311, or permission of instructor

Textbooks (required):

Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg. *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*. Wadsworth Publishing Co, 10th Edition.

Expectations from Previous Courses:

Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association

Course Description and Purpose:

A study of the theory and practice of public relations, its role in administration, its role in society and its potential as a career.

The purpose of this course is to increase your understanding of the theory and practice of public relations, its functions in organizations and its role in society. You will study the professional development of the field, issues and principles of practice, and concepts and theories related to public relations' role in social systems. You will apply course material to public relations problems by working on assigned exercises. These exercises will also be used to hone your writing skills and professionalism.

Course Policies:

Attendance: It is expected that all students attend every class and be on time. Absences severely handicap the learning process and reflect on the student's ability to meet deadlines. Being late for class interrupts the momentum of the class and distracts other students.

A student may miss three class sessions without penalty; however, on each successive absence, a grade reduction will be made from the course final grade.

Student athletes should discuss their schedules individually with the instructor. There may be occasions where the absence of a student athlete will not be permitted.

Submitting Assignments: Unless otherwise stated, assignments and class exercises are to be handed in during the class. In an attempt to provide you with a professional atmosphere, deadlines will be made for many in-class assignments. In such cases, if the item is not ready at the deadline, it will not be accepted. Work assigned for overnight will be due at the next class meeting, unless otherwise agreed.

Makeup Work: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. No late work will be accepted and a grade of 0 will be given. Assignments, quizzes or tests missed as a result of absence will only be made up by prior arrangement with the instructor. Without this arrangement, a grade of 0 will be given.

Written Work: All work must be typed. Consider yourself a professional and prepare your materials as such. *Requirements:* All written submissions must be type-written or printer generated, double spaced, 12 point type, Times font (no artsy fonts), one-inch margins on all edges, and proper slugs. Assignments must adhere to the proper style standards.

Resubmission/Rework of Assignments: Select assignments may be resubmitted with improvements. In such cases, the original grade and the new submission grades are averaged to arrive at a final grade for that assignment. **Original materials with instructor comments must accompany resubmissions.**

Grading:

The final grade for the course will be determined in the following manner:

Examinations	20%
- 3 Exams during the term (40 points each)	
- 1 Exam during finals week (80 points)	
Work Assignments	80%
- of varying point values and degrees of difficulty	

Grading Assignments:

Assignments will be graded using a standard percentage scale for assignment of letter grades. Total points will vary with the amount of work produced by the class over the course of the semester.

Projects:

For the fall semester we will be practicing project assignments through client simulations unless otherwise noted. (In COM412 all projects are with local companies.)

Work Assignments: Students will complete a number of public relations assignments in and out of class varying in degree of difficulty and preparation requirements. Some of these assignments will be completed as part of a group and others will be independent assignments. These include the following:

Situation Analysis: This is the first part of a strategic plan. It provides: an overview of the organization and its competition; the problem the organization needs to solve; and often includes a SWOT analysis. The situation analysis does not list recommendations or solutions. It serves as the discussion document that leads to the proposals that outline potential solutions.

Proposals: A proposal is a set of recommendations that address a specific problem or challenge (usually identified in a situation analysis). The purpose of a proposal is to get something accomplished. In this course, we will develop a *Media Analysis Proposal* and an *Event Management Proposal*. Successful proposals become work plans for our clients.

Press Kit/Media Kit: This is an information kit that is developed specifically to meet the needs of the media. It *may* include the following elements: news releases; backgrounders; fact sheets; photographs or images with captions; company collateral (brochures or other literature); and opportunity announcements.

Measurement Analysis Paper: In this research paper, students will explain their understanding of public relations measurement by applying it to a client problem.

Issue Analysis Paper: For this research paper, students will choose a topic from a list of public relations issues and provide a current literature review of the topic along with a brief case example. This is a formal research paper of about 12 to 15 pages that is prepared in APA style. This project will include a brief presentation of 5 to 7 minutes.

Ethics Paper: In this analysis essay in which students respond to an ethics challenge that is presented during a simulation. This is a short *researched* response paper. Students will support their decisions with sound research.

Exams: There will be four exams: three during the semester and one during finals week. The exams will cover material presented during the respective sections of class, i.e., not comprehensive. Tests may consist of short answer, multiple guess, essay, and/or sample writing.

College Statement on Disability: If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements, you must:

- 1) contact the Coordinator of Learning Services and Disability Services, Tamera Longsderff, in the Center of Student Success, BSC 226, (717) 361-1549, longsdtl@etown.edu, AND
- 2) meet with me, the instructor, within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

Schedule: (Tentative ... this schedule always changes throughout the semester to meet the needs of the learning environment and your projects.)

Day	Date	Some Plans	Some Deadlines
Tues	Sep 1	Course Introduction and Expectations Analysis of Entry-Level PR Practitioner Ch 1: PR Roles and Specialties	
Thur	Sep 3	Ch 2: PR Origins and Evolution Ch 3: Trends in PR The Public Relations Game	
Tues	Sep 8	Exam #1 Client introduction activity	
Thur	Sep 10	Ch 4: Research: Planning Processes and Techniques Ch 5: Publics and Public Opinion	
Tues	Sep 15	Exam #2	
Thur	Sep 17	Ch 6. Theoretical Underpinnings for PR Ch 7. PR Ethics and Responsibilities	
Tues	Sep 22	Ch 8. PR and the Law	Situation Analysis due
Thur	Sep 24	Exam #3	
Tues	Sep 29	Everyday Ethical Challenge Activity	
Thur	Oct 1	Ch 9. Strategic Management in PR Practice PR and Strategic Planning	
Tues	Oct 6	Ch 10. Communication, Channels and Media	Ethics Paper due
Thur	Oct 8	No Classes – Fall Break!	
Tues	Oct 13	Ch 11. Tactics and Techniques: Details that make PR Strategies Work	
Thur	Oct 15	Media Relations: Research, Tools of the Trade	
Tues	Oct 20	Media Relations continued	
Thur	Oct 22	Media Relations: Working with the Media PR and Media Convergence Media Training	
Tues	Oct 27	PR and Advertising (for PR Sake)	Media Analysis Proposal due
Thur	Oct 29	Measurement and Evaluation	
Tues	Nov 3	PR and the Nonprofit Sector Special Events as PR Tool	

Thur	Nov 5	Planning PR Collateral Material PR Publications	
Tues	Nov 10	Ch 12. Campaigns Client Activity	
Thur	Nov 12	Corporate Social Responsibility Ch 13. Crisis and Credibility	
Tues	Nov 17	Crisis Activity	
Thur	Nov 19	Ch 14. Public Relations Practice and a World View Review for Exam #4	Issue Paper due
Tues	Nov 24	Work Days	Event Management Proposal due
Thur	Nov 26	Thanksgiving Break	
Tues	Dec 1	Issue Presentations	
Thur	Dec 3	Issue Presentations	Measurement Paper and Media Kits due
Tues	Dec 8	Issue Presentations	
Thur	Dec 10	Work Days	Final Day to Resubmit Projects
Tues	Dec 15	Exam #4 2:30 – 5:30 PM	FINALS WEEK