

COM 412 - Advanced Public Relations
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11 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays
S204
Spring 2004

Prerequisites: COM 351

Textbook (required): Center, Allen H. and Jackson, Patrick. Public Relations Practices: Managerial Case Studies and Problems, sixth edition.

Course Description and Purpose:

The course provides an opportunity for students to build upon knowledge, skills and expertise in public relations by applying them to the study of actual public relations cases. The analysis and evaluation of actual public relations practice lead the student to a better knowledge of public relations principles, application and management in the profession.

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the concepts and principles of public relations as they are applied in the field. This will be accompanied by the use of case studies with supplemental lectures. At the end of the course, students should have attained knowledge and understanding of the following central concepts:

1. The role and functions of public relations in an industrialized society.
2. Career opportunities in the field and professional/ethical/legal responsibilities.
3. An understanding of public relations activity in such diverse areas as corporations, government, counseling firms, social agencies, trade organizations, education, sports and entertainment.
4. The use of communications strategies to achieve organizational goals.
5. Practical guidelines for utilizing written, spoken and visual techniques to reach selected audiences.

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. Students are responsible for all material covered or assigned in class. Class participation affects the final grade.

A student may miss two class sessions without penalty; however, on each successive absence, a grade reduction will be made from the course final grade. Tardiness will negatively affect a student's class participation grade.

Student athletes must discuss their schedules individually with the instructor at the beginning of the semester. There may be occasions when the absence of a student athlete will not be excused.

Assignments: Professionalism is of extreme importance in public relations. Students will be expected to conduct themselves as professionals. This course will contain group work. Being able to function as a contributing member of a team is also an important element of public relations.

Submission of 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 assignments. Work assigned for overnight will be due at the beginning of the next class meeting, unless otherwise agreed.

Makeup Work: Assignments are due as specified above. No late work will be accepted and a grade of 0 will be given. Assignments, quizzes or tests missed as a result of absence only will be made up by prior arrangement with the instructor. Unless allowed to be made up, a grade of 0 will be given.

Written Work: All work must be typed. Consider yourself a professional and prepare your materials as such. All written submissions (in class and out of class assignments) must be type-written or printer generated, double spaced, 12 point type, Times or Times Roman, one inch margins on all edges, and proper slugs or page numbering. APA Style Manual (research white papers) and AP Stylebook (news/planning white papers) are expected.

Grading Assignments:

Assignments will be graded on professional quality, clarity of understanding and analysis of public relations practices. The value of the assignments will be tallied at the end of the semester and factored into the distribution.

Grading:

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

Midterm Examination	10%	
Final Examination	10%	
Work Assignments*	40%	* Includes in-class assignments.
Group Project	40%	

Grading Scale:

A+	93	A	90	A-	87
B+	83	B	80	B-	77
C+	73	C	70	C-	67
D+	63	D	60	D-	57

Projects:

Swipe File: Students will keep a collection of “neat” ideas, layouts, headlines, etc., that they may want to “take off from” some day. Most professionals maintain swipe files as ticklers for those days when the creativity just isn’t flowing. Each of you will be responsible for a swipe file this semester, which will contain at least 25 items. Each item should be accompanied by an explanation of where it originated and why you chose to include it in your file (this might include an example of how you might use it in the future).

Case Presentation: Each student will present a case and lead a class discussion concerning the case. These will be polished presentations, including visual aids or whatever you feel necessary to best make your point. (I am not impressed by high tech displays, so keep in mind the content

of your presentation.) The presentation should consider the following: What is the history of the issue? How was it handled? Can you identify the public(s)' reaction? (What was it?) Consider ethical, legal and professional judgments. Students must include current issues in case presentation and discussion. Students will draw for sequence. Material from student presentations is fair game for exam questions.

PR Problems: These challenges require students to prepare plans and materials to solve the problems. Think of this as a professional piece that you would give to an employer. Consider all aspects of the challenge when preparing your materials. Students will draw for these.

Book Review: Read a book (titles are drawn from a pre-selected list) and review it in terms of public relations theory and practice. Creativity is appreciated, but content is still paramount.

Academic Research Projects: Students will participate in a number of academic research projects. This may include literature review, content analysis, and data analysis. Contributions from these assignments will be used in a joint faculty-student research project to be submitted to AEJMC. Dyads or triads will be formed for this assignment.

Practitioner Group Work: Each semester during this course, the class acts/serves as a public relations agency and tackles a number of group assignments. These are "real" projects with "real" clients. Outcomes for these projects depend on the nature and demands of the projects. Group participation is also assessed.

Exams: There will be two exams: one at mid-term 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 multiple-guess, short answer, essay and product writing.

Schedule: Spring 2004

All speakers are tentative due to professional schedules, negotiations and weather.

Day	Date	Discussion	Major Deadlines
Tues	Jan. 20	Intro to Course Discuss all assignments	Commit to all assignments. Assign case presentations.
Thur	Jan. 22	Ch 1: The Purpose of PR Ch 2: How PR Deals with Problems and Opportunities	Discuss "The Letter"
Tues	Jan. 27	Introduction of Projects Ch 3: Employer-Employee Relations Corporate video and new media	Deadline: "The Letter"
Thur	Jan. 29	Ch 3: Case discussions and student case presentation	
Tues	Feb. 3	Ch 4: Home Community Relations and Case Discussions	
Thur	Feb. 5	Guest Speaker: TBA	
Tues	Feb. 10	Ch 4: Student Case Study Presentation and Group Time	
Thur	Feb. 12	Ch 5: Investor Relations and Case Discussions	
Tues	Feb. 17	Guest Speaker: TBA	
Thur	Feb. 19	Group Work Day	
Tues	Feb. 24	Ch 6: Consumer Relations and Case Discussion	
Thur	Feb. 26	Ch 6: Case Discussion and Student Case Study Presentation	
Mar	1 – 5	Spring Break	
Tues	Mar. 9	Ch 7: Media Relations and Case Discussions	
Thur	Mar. 11	Ch 7: Student Case Study Presentation	
Tues	Mar. 16	Midterm	
Thur	Mar. 18	Group Meeting Time	Deadline: Book Review
Tues	Mar. 23	Ch 8: Public Issues & Concerns, Private Interests & Campaigns	
Thur	Mar 25	Video in class: Classifying Political Campaigns	
Tues	Mar. 30	Discussion of Political Campaigns as Public Relations Campaigns	
Thur	Apr. 1	Ch 8: Student Case Study Presentation	

Tues	Apr. 6	Group Project Meeting	
Thur	Apr. 8	Monday schedule of classes. No class.	PR Problem Due
Tues	Apr. 13	Ch 9: Crisis Management and Case Discussions	
Thur	Apr. 15	Ch 9: Case Discussions and Student Case Study Presentation	
Tues	Apr. 20	Guest Speaker: TBA	Swipe File Due
Thur	Apr. 22	Group Work Day	
Tues	Apr. 27	Ch 10: Standards, Ethics and Values	
Thur	Apr. 29	Ch 10: Case Discussions & Student Case Study Presentation	
Tues	May 4	Final Group Project Presentation	
Thur	May 6	Ch 11: Career Preparation Review for Final.	
Thur	May 13	Final Exam 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	