



School of Advertising & Public Relations
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION
University of Tennessee Knoxville

Syllabus

Course Dates: Jan. 14–Apr. 28, 2015

Time: 12:40–1:55 p.m.

Location: Com 314

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:30–4:30 p.m.

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PUBL 370—Public Relations Cases

Description

Public Relations Cases uses a case-study method to teach students about theoretical and applied principles of public relations campaign management. Students examine successful/unsuccessful examples of public relations in order to learn how to plan more effective campaigns and to critique and evaluate completed campaigns. As part of the course students continue to hone their writing skills and learn to be more critical of the role played by culture, the media, opinion leaders, the Internet and social media, and multiple stakeholders and publics in the public relations process.

Student Course Objectives/Outcomes

- Be able to assess the effectiveness of public relations research, analysis/planning, communication/implementation, and evaluation, in written and oral analysis of cases.
- Be able to assess components of MBO, including publics, statement of problem or situation, goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics.
- Be able to articulate the components of professionalism related to public relations, including the body of knowledge, fiduciary responsibility, academic programs, professional organizations such as the PRSA, IABC, WIC, etc., ethics including the PRSA code of ethics, and role of public relations in society.
- Be able to identify and analyze ethical issues and apply ethical codes and values to those situations in order to make effective management decisions.
- Be able to work effectively in teams, explain the importance of teams, and explain the criteria of effective teamwork.
- To learn from successful/unsuccessful organizations in order to benchmark performance and develop strategic evaluation/planning skills.
- To learn about different types of public relations practiced by government, financial, nonprofit, crisis, etc.
- To understand how to conduct the research necessary to develop a strategic plan.
- To continue to hone public relations writing skills and to become more critical message producers.

“Everybody experiences far more than he understands. Yet it is experience, rather than understanding, that influences behavior.”

Marshall McLuhan

Readings (required)

PDFs of primary readings are available from (www.dropbox.com/sh/twv6lg05b5llyj2/AAA_iCt34OR2RdrYvHJGywFaa?dl=0). Additional readings will be made available throughout the semester.

Recommended Readings: Texts all worth owning

- Hendrix, J. A. (2001, etc.). *Public relations cases (5th, 6th, 7th, or 8th edition)*. Belmont CA: Wadsworth. **Note:** you can get the 5th edition for less than \$4.33 with free shipping from e-bay. You can get the 8th edition for about \$10 used from Amazon.
- Morrison, T., & Conway, W. A. (2006). *Kiss, bow, or shake hands (second edition)*. Avon MA: Adams Media.
- Smith, R. (2005). *Strategic planning for public relations (2nd, 3rd, or 4th edition)*. Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Available used, 1¢ to \$45 on Amazon.

Class Policies

- As future professionals, my preferred mode of communicating with you is face-to-face. Come see me whenever you are around.
- Make an effort to spend time with each other outside of class in the flesh, not just on social media.
- Do your readings and come to class prepared to talk—if you are nervous about participating, come talk to me for some ideas about how to succeed.
- Bring printed and marked up hard copies of class readings to each class, or bring your readings up on the class computer. You should read on paper and not the computer screen whenever possible.
- No phones, smartphones, tablets, headphones, or other technology, open, secretly checked, or accessible during class.
- All assignments not done in class must be *printed*, **and** submitted electronically, and will be automatically checked via *SafeAssign*.
- *Careful proofreading, spell checking, and AP style is required on all writing.*
- My vision is not what it used to be. Consequently, I prefer a very legible font like *Bookman Old Style* 11 point. Never use *Times New Roman*. *I will provide Bookman O.S. to you if you need it.*
- If you must miss class because of a religious holiday, you need to tell me ahead of time (at the beginning of the semester), and take steps to make up the missed class *before* you miss it.
- All work should be your own. Never cheat. Be aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Cite whatever is not your own original ideas or writing (including prior papers from other classes). *Plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment and/or the class at my discretion, and will be reported as an academic integrity violation.* Note: Plagiarism detection software will be used for all assignments. These products work *very well* and check the Internet, journals, books, previous class papers submitted to the system across the world, and bespoke papers that teachers have uploaded. Why would you risk your career over a lower class grade? I received Cs, Ds, and Fs in classes, it really is not the end of the world, and is a lot better than being kicked out of school over something so small. Be sure to know the University of Tennessee's Academic Standards of Conduct and Honor Statement, in [Hilltopics](#).
- **Attendance is required** or your final grade will be reduced. You get two absences without penalty, and two with a final grade penalty (-5% and -10%). After five absences you will fail the entire class. However, if you must miss a class above your allotted absences, see me *ahead of time* about making arrangements to cover the class via Skype, etc. Professionals make arrangements when they have to miss work or events.

“To have an answer without knowing the question, without understanding that you might have been given a different answer if the question had been posed differently, may be more than meaningless; it may be exceedingly dangerous.

Neil Postman (1988), Conscientious Objections, p. 26

Diversity and Ethics

We are intellectuals. Consequently, we should respect diversity in all of its forms: race, sex, gender, age, religion, political orientation, country of origin, economic status, etc. Everyone in the U.S. (citizen or visitor) has a right to his/her opinion and should feel comfortable sharing their views. As citizens, we are under no obligation to agree with what other people believe, however, we must, as a civil society, support people's right to worship, act, look, and think, as they want. In this classroom, we will not tolerate any mistreatment of others because of how they look, what they believe, where they come from, or because of a lack of knowledge or skills beyond their control. The only thing that we will not be tolerant of is a lack of ethical and moral fiber. As Donald M. Erb said: "Do not be tolerant of misrepresentation, of superficiality, of the parading of false issues as though they were real issues. Tolerance does not extend to intellectual dishonesty or ineptitude" —*Plaque, Erb Memorial Union, University of Oregon, 1990.*

"A sour soul will eat through the purest profile like acid through a paper bag, but a tiger could not mar a face animated by a good heart."

Gerald Kersh, 1956. In, Harlan Ellison, *Slippage*, (1997, p. xxviii)

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that allows for accommodation, please contact me immediately. Be sure to also contact the Office of Disability Services, discuss your specific needs and obtain official documentation before the class begins. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services in Dunford Hall, at 865-974-6087, or by video phone at, 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Open Records

Public Law 93-380 requires me to protect the confidentiality of educational records for prospective, current, and former students. Grades cannot be discussed via e-mail, or with other people like parents, siblings, friends, etc.

Grading

A 95-100, **A-** 90-94; **C+** 77-79, **C** 73-76, **C-** 70-72;
B+ 87-89, **B** 83-86, **B-** 80-82, **D+** 67-69, **D** 63-66, **D-** 60-62; **F:** 0-59
NB: A C- does not count as a C for purposes of passing required classes.

Assignments

Exams (Three at 10%—exam 3 will be a take home exam due the final exam day in class). **30%**
Class Lecture (Group discussion and exercise around case studies, group grade) **10%**
Case Study Memo (2-3 p, ss, "memo" describing three possible case studies, details provided) . **10%**
Interviews and Case Study (5-10 pp. d-s., essay describing an actual case researched) . **20%**
Arthur Page Case Study (In groups of 3 or 4, you will prepare actual AP case study) **25%**
Participation (Although this is not attendance, attendance is required to get higher than a C) **5%**
Extra Credit (at my discretion I will give XC for contributions beyond everyday class) ... **0-10%**

Total **100-110%**

Assignment Details

Exams

There will be three exams that will cover the course content. Exams may be in class or take-home/essay based exams, due on the indicated exam day. Other testing formats may also be considered, including oral exams, presentation based exams, etc. In other words, I do not give memorization, or “mystical choice” type exams. I want you to demonstrate that you understand the issues and the concepts.

Class Lecture

You will be paired off with a fellow student and the two of you will be responsible for covering that week’s class material. Be sure to prepare at least 3–5 pages of handouts, different visual aids, and a pre-class activity to illustrate the concepts.

Case Study Memo

You will prepare a memo (in memo form: single-spaced, 1" margins, full block format, etc.—see me if you need a refresher) outlining three original ideas for case studies, including the following: some details about the organization, some details about the case, significance of the issue, pedagogical value of exploring the case, and what genre the case fits into (investor relations, community relations, crisis, health communication, issues management, etc.). The purpose of the memo is to help you focus your attention on possible issues that may be used later in the semester in your individual case study, or in the Arthur Page Case Study assignment. Cases should not be advertising or marketing oriented. Focus on public relations. Additional details will be provided.

Interviews and Case Study

You will interview a communication professional about a crisis, program, campaign, or CSR initiative that they were responsible for implementing or participating in. Based on the interview and additional research, write up a case study describing what was undertaken. Your case description and materials should resemble the samples used throughout the semester, and should include details about RACE/ROPE activities

Arthur Page Case Study

You will prepare a case study per the Arthur Page Case Study Competition guidelines. Cases will actually be submitted next year (you will be completing it after this year’s deadline). Grand Prize \$5,000, 1st Prize \$2,500, 2nd Prize \$1,500, 3rd Prize \$800. Details will be provided. Winning this would be a huge boost for your resume and job applications, but just participating is also something you can talk about. <http://www.awpagesociety.com/insights/winning-case-studies>.

Participation

Participation is a measure of your preparation and willingness to engage the ideas and concepts in the class, as well as your ability to illumine the concepts under discussion. In other words, you’ve thought about the ideas and issues a bit before you walked into class, and are able to engage the ideas, ask questions, and contribute to the learning experiences of your fellow students. Participation will also include your completion of class activities proposed by your fellow students.

Note: Participation is not a reflection of attendance; however, any student who has more than three absences cannot receive more than a C on this portion of their grade. Being in class is a prerequisite for participation, and participating intensely but infrequently is no substitute for regular participation. As professionals, you quickly learn that such people are unprepared most of the time and you do not want to work with them.

Extra Credit

Occasionally, students will come to class or share something special for their fellow students: an article, a handout, a book, etc. I want to encourage you to consider giving back more and reward you for it. The more you have the ability to be a resource to others, the more valuable you become as an organizational member, and the stronger will be your relationships and networking skills.

Class Schedule: PBRL 370: Public Relations Cases—Tentative

† Class Lecture Assignment Days

Date	Day	Topics and Readings	readings found in "dropbox.com" folder	Assignment Due
Jan. 14	1	Introduction, <i>brainstorm topics</i> , RACE Read: "Day 1" in Dropbox (Smith pp. 1–28, and case study)		
Jan. 19	†2	MBO Read: "Day 2" (MBO handouts, Hendrix 11–45)		
Jan. 21	3	Analysis of Arthur Page winning Cases Read: "Day 3," (AP Instructions)		
Jan. 26	†4	Ethics/PRSA CODE Read: "Day 4" (AP, GP, 2015, CVS; 2 nd AP, 2010, Subaru); identify three examples of ethical cases from the media		
Jan. 28	5	Ethics activity Read: "Day 5" (Ethics Handouts)		
Feb. 2	†6	Professionalism/Encroachment Read: "Day 6" (Kent, 2012, BRY; Taylor & Kent, 2010, Anticipatory Soc.)		
Feb. 4	7	Professionalism Activity Read: "Day 7" (TBA) Case Study Memo		
Feb. 9	†8	Read: (Assorted pages from Hendrix on types of public relations settings)		
Feb. 11	9	Study Session, Exam 1; Begin Meeting on AP assignment.		
Feb. 16	10	Australia Class via Skype or Video		
Feb. 18	11	Australia someone will proctor Exam Exam 1		
Feb. 23	†12	Culture Read: Kent & Taylor, 2011; assign Morrison & Conaway chapter		
Feb. 25	13	Class Activity Read: Morrison & Conaway, 2006, individual Chapter		
Mar. 1	†14	Culture Cont. Read: Kent & Taylor, 2003, culture; Hofstede, 2 readings in folder		
Mar. 3	15	Culture Activity Read: Review readings from Days 12 & 14		
Mar. 8	†16	Teams/Teamwork Read: "Day 16" (Chuck Lubbers; Janis)		
Mar. 10	17	TBA (Study Session, Exam 2; Teamwork Activity) Interview and Case Study		
Mar. 15	18	Spring Break Hong Kong		
Mar. 17	19	Spring Break Hong Kong		
Mar. 22	†20	Public relations activities Read: "Day 20" (excerpts from Hendrix, passim)		
Mar. 24	21 Exam 2		
Mar. 29	22	TBA Social Media Week ...		
Mar. 31	23	TBA Social Media Week ... IABD		
Apr. 5	†24	Organizational Crisis Read: "Day 24" (Coombs; Coombs & Schmidt; Kent Ch.)		
Apr. 7	25	Class Activity Read: "Day 25" (TBA)		
Apr. 12	†26	Issues Management Read: "Day 26" (Smith, new book, Step 6)		
Apr. 14	27	Guest (Michael Palenchar); Activity		
Apr. 19	†28	New Technology Read: "Day 28" (Hendrix, new book; Kent et al., etc.)		
Apr. 21	29	Activity Half Class time for working on case study (attendance Required)		
Apr. 26	30	Class time for working on case study (attendance Required)		
Apr. 28	31	Class time for working on case study (attendance Required)		
May 4	32	Wednesday, 10:15–12:15 FINAL EXAM DAY..... Exam 3 Arthur Page Case		

Case Ideas: (1) Mothers Against Gun Violence; (2) cities taking action on climate change (e.g., DC, Boston, San Francisco); (3) universities fighting to keep guns off campuses; (4) various religious organizations pushing climate change; (5) Paris' response to ISIS; (5) U.S. response to the migrant crisis; (6) the GMO labeling issue; (7) Volkswagen's pollution scandal; (8) racial unrest over police killings; (9) cities preparation for mass shootings; (10) rising cost of higher education.