

Strategies of Public Relations, COM 371-01
Spring 2018
Wednesdays, 5:30 to 8:20 p.m.
Kendall Hall, Room 233
Course Syllabus

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Course Description

Strategies of Public Relations blends the study of public relations cases and public relations campaign development. Students study public relations cases and create communication campaigns for real world clients. In the process, students engage in audience analysis, message development, channel selection, budget preparation, and development of a strategic plan for corporate, nonprofit, association, and/or government clients.

Course Objectives

Students completing this course should be able to:

- Understand the processes in professional public relations work: research, planning, communication, and evaluation.
- Develop a strategic public relations plan to deal with real world opportunities and challenges.
- Develop an understanding of public relations principles and how to apply them to opportunities and challenges in the work, community, and social environments.
- Develop the ability to comprehend, analyze and critically assess successful and poorly executed strategic public relations campaigns.

Required Textbooks:

Center, A., Jackson, P., Smith, S., & Stansberry, F. (2014). *Public relations practices: Managerial case studies and problems* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
ISBN: 978-0-13-297193-5

Litwin, M. L. (2013). *The public relations practitioner's playbook for all strategic communicators: A synergized approach to effective two-way communication*. (4th ed.). Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse.
ISBN: 978-1-4918-0454-4

Recommended Textbook: The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

Course Topics by Week

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| Week 1 | Jan. 24 | No Class (Dr. Farbman on Business Trip) |
| Week 2 | Jan. 31 | Introduction Public Relations Planning (<i>PR Practices</i> Chapt. 1 & 2, <i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 3, 7 & 8) Assign Working Groups |
| Week 3 | Feb. 7 | Public Relations Research (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 4) Skill Builder: Newsletters & Brochures (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 12) Meet with Working Groups |
| Week 4 | Feb. 14 | Meet with Working Groups (Client Interviews) Skill Builder: News Writing & News Releases (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 5) PR Plan Client Proposals Due |
| Week 5 | Feb. 21 | Public Relations Evaluation, Public Opinion and Persuasion (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 2 & 6) Skill Builder: Fact Sheets & Backgrounders (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 5) |
| Week 6 | Feb. 28 | Meet with Working Groups (Audience Research) Skill Builder: Public Speaking, Presentations (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 13) |
| Week 7 | March 7 | Meet with Working Groups (Case Studies, Audience Research Findings & PR Plan Outline) Skill Builder: Preparing PSAs & Media Advisories |
| | March 14 | Spring Break – No Class |
| Week 8 | March 21 | Crisis Communications Management (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 14, <i>PR Practices</i> Chapt. 6) Skill Builder: Media Kits & Media Relations (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 9) |
| Week 9 | March 28 | First Set of PR Case Studies Presentations |
| Week 10 | April 4 | Second Set of PR Case Studies Presentations |
| Week 11 | April 11 | Meet with Working Groups (Review PR Plans) |

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| Week 12 | April 18 | Skill Builder: Using the Internet (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 10) All PR Plans Due at 5:30 p.m. |
| Week 13 | April 25 | Skill Builder: Getting the PR Job You Want (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 17) |
| Week 14 | May 2 | All Media Kits Due at 5:30 p.m. First Set of Final Presentations |
| Week 15 | May 9 | Second Set of Final Presentations |

Course Evaluation:

Case Study Presentation (15%): Scheduled for the March 28th and April 4th classes. Each working group will choose a case from the *Public Relations Practices* text and give a presentation to the class. The presentation is to be 30 to 40 minutes in length and should address the following:

- An overview of the case, which includes the issues that your team would address;
- The research your team would conduct and why;
- The audiences involved in the case;
- The prominent objectives, strategies and tactics used in the case; and
- The ways the case's success was measured and what additional or different methods your group would have recommended for evaluation.

Groups may select one case from the PR Practices text to present:

- The Pepsi Syringe Case (*PR Practices* Case 7-3)
- The Tobacco War (*PR Practices* Case 8-2)
- Guns (*PR Practices* Case 8-3)
- Trouble in the Pews (*PR Practices* Case 9-1)
- British Petroleum (*PR Practices* Case 9-4)
- Hurricane Katrina (*PR Practices* Case 9-5)
- Penn State (*PR Practices* Case 10-2)

Two Group Projects (25% each): Each group will complete two projects:

Public Relations Plan, Due April 18, 2018, at 5:30 p.m.

For the first project, each group must submit a business proposal to a client, soliciting work.

Media Kit, Due May 2, 2018, at 5:30 p.m.

For the second project, each group must create a complete media kit based on the group's PR Plan, suitable for use by your client.

Two copies of each project are due:

- One copy is reviewed, graded and returned to the student group.

- A second revised copy is due to your client on date of final presentation. PR plan must include all revisions suggested by the professor.

Each project for the professor must also include a signed work log that verifies the amount of work each group member completed. Because effective public relations is built on meeting deadlines, I will not accept late projects.

Failure to participate with your group in completing either project will result in an “F” grade for your individual project grade(s).

Final Presentations (25%): Instead of a written final exam, each group will give a detailed, 30 to 40 minute presentation about its public relations plan. These presentations will take place the final two weeks of class. Guidelines for the presentations will be distributed in class. These presentations are to be professional, with handouts, visuals and other supporting materials for the audience. In addition, each student will dress professionally. Also, you are to invite a representative from your client's business to our class to attend your presentation. Your group will have to arrange all accommodations, such as driving directions, parking and refreshments.

Participation (10%): Because this course involves a significant amount of in-class participation, group work, skill builders and guest speakers, your class attendance and participation are expected, evaluated and assigned a grade. I expect you to attend every class on time.

Grading Scale:

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| A = 94 to 100 | C = 73 to 76 |
| A- = 90 to 93 | C- = 70 to 72 |
| B+ = 87 to 89 | D+ = 67 to 69 |
| B = 83 to 86 | D = 63 to 66 |
| B- = 80 to 82 | D- = 60 to 62 |
| C+ = 77 to 79 | F = 0 to 59 |

Course Expectations

The topics and activities for each class date on the syllabus are a tentative outline. We may change the topic schedule based on our progression and/or guest speaker availability.

Come to class having read, studied and prepared to discuss the assigned material.

If, for any reason, you have questions from a previous class or wish to discuss an assignment, please let me know. Please make appointments with me to talk about any aspect of the course, in particular the group projects. I will schedule appointments with groups on an as needed basis. I've listed my office and cell phone numbers. If you get my voicemail at work or on my cell, leave a message and I will get back to you within 24 hours, guaranteed. Or, send e-mail to farbman@tcnj.edu.

TCNJ Policies

TCNJ's final examination policy is available on the web:
<http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/finaevaluations.htm>

Attendance

Every student is expected to participate in each of his/her courses through regular attendance at lecture and laboratory sessions. It is further expected that every student will be present, on time, and prepared to participate when scheduled class sessions begin. At the first class meeting of a semester, instructors are expected to distribute in writing the attendance policies that apply to their courses. While attendance itself is not used as a criterion for academic evaluations, grading is frequently based on participation in class discussion, laboratory work, performance, studio practice, field experience, or other activities that may take place during class sessions. If these areas for evaluation make class attendance essential, the student may be penalized for failure to perform satisfactorily in the required activities. Students who must miss classes due to participation in a field trip, athletic event, or other official college function should arrange with their instructors for such class absences well in advance. The Office of Academic Affairs will verify, upon request, the dates of and participation in such college functions. In every instance, however, the student has the responsibility to initiate arrangements for make-up work.

Students are expected to attend class and complete assignments as scheduled, to avoid outside conflicts (if possible), and to enroll only in those classes that they can expect to attend on a regular basis. Absences from class are handled between students and instructors. The instructor may require documentation to substantiate the reason for the absence. The instructor should provide make-up opportunities for student absences caused by illness, injury, death in the family, observance of religious holidays, and similarly compelling personal reasons including physical disabilities. For lengthy absences, make-up opportunities might not be feasible and are at the discretion of the instructor. The Office of Academic Affairs will notify the faculty of the dates of religious holidays on which large numbers of students are likely to be absent and are, therefore, unsuitable for the scheduling of examinations. Students have the responsibility of notifying the instructors in advance of expected absences. In cases of absence for a week or more, students are to notify their instructors immediately. If they are unable to do so they may contact the Office of Records and Registration. The Office of Records and Registration will notify the instructor of the student's absence. The notification is not an excuse but simply a service provided by the Office of Records and Registration. Notifications cannot be acted upon if received after an absence. In every instance the student has the responsibility to initiate arrangements for make-up work.

TCNJ's attendance policy is available on the web:
<http://www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/policies/attendance.html>

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic dishonesty is any attempt by the student to gain academic advantage through dishonest means, to submit, as his or her own, work that has not been done by him/her or to give improper aid to another student in the completion of an assignment. Such dishonesty would include, but is not limited to: submitting as his/her own a project, paper, report, test, or speech copied from, partially copied, or paraphrased from the work of another (whether the source is printed, under copyright, or in manuscript form). Credit must be given for words quoted or paraphrased. The rules apply to any academic dishonesty, whether the work is graded or ungraded, group or individual, written or oral.

TCNJ's academic integrity policy is available on the web:

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/integrity.html>.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Any student who has a documented disability and is in need of academic accommodations should notify the professor of this course and contact the Office of Differing Abilities Services (609-771-2571). Accommodations are individualized and in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992.

TCNJ's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy is available on the web:

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~affirm/ada.html>.