

Strategies of Public Relations, COMM 371-01
Spring 2010
Wednesdays, 5:30 to 8:20 p.m.
Kendall Hall, Room 233
Course Syllabus

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Course Description

An overview of research-based strategies and tactics used in public relations practices to meet communication goals - with special emphasis on the effort to transform public relations from a craft into a complete, recognized profession.

Course Objectives

Students completing this course should:

- A. Appreciate the differences among public relations, marketing, advertising and other forms of public communication.

- B. Learn about the history of public relations; the varieties of public relations work (e.g., in corporations, membership organizations, entertainment and sports, etc.); differences between firms and departments, individual career paths and ethics.

- C. Understand the processes in professional public relations work: research, planning, communication, evaluation.

- D. Become acquainted with the range of strategic and tactical skills expected of public relations practitioners.

Required Textbooks:

Litwin, M. Larry, *The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook*. AuthorHouse Publishing, 2009, Third Edition. ISBN: 978-1-4389-9475-8

The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

Recommended Reading: Litwin, M. Larry, *The ABCs of Strategic Communication*, AuthorHouse, 2008, Second Edition; a college-level English grammar handbook; and a daily newspaper, such as the *Trenton Times*, *Star-Ledger*, *Philadelphia Inquirer* or *New York Times*.

Course Topics by Week

Week 1	Jan. 20	Introduction Skill Builder: Public Relations Planning (<i>Playbook</i> Chpts. 3, 6 & 7) Assign Working Groups
Week 2	Jan. 27	What is Public Relations? The Evolution of Public Relations (<i>Playbook</i> Chpts. 1 & 2) Meet with Working Groups
Week 3	Feb. 3	Ethics and Professionalism (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 16) Skill Builder: News Writing & News Releases (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 5) PR Plan Client Proposals Due
Week 4	Feb. 10	Research (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 4) Skill Builder: Fact Sheets & Backgrounders (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 5)
Week 5	Feb. 17	Public Relations and Communication Theories (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 2) Skill Builder: Public Speaking, Presentations (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 13)
Week 6	Feb. 24	Public Relations Evaluation Public Opinion and Persuasion Skill Builder: Newsletters & Brochures (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 12) Mid Term Exam Review
Week 7	March 3	Mid Term Exam
	March 10	Spring Break – NO CLASS
Week 8	March 17	PR and Fundraising by Dawn Epstein, major gifts officer, TCNJ Skill Builder: Media Kits & Media Relations (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 9)
Week 9	March 24	Using Advertising (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 11) PR Law (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 16) Skill Builder: Conducting Special Events (<i>Playbook</i> 15)
Week 10	March 31	Guest Speaker

Week 11	April 7	Crisis Communications Management (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 14) Skill Builder: Using Radio and TV (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 10)
Week 12	April 14	Lobbying, Entertainment and Sports PR Skill Builder: Using the Internet (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 10) All PR Plans Due
Week 13	April 21	Skill Builder: Getting the PR Job You Want (<i>Playbook</i> Chapt. 17)
Week 14	April 28	All Media Kits Due First Set of Final Presentations
Week 15	May 5	Second Set of Final Presentations

Course Evaluation:

Mid Term Examination (15%): Scheduled for March 3rd class. The exam is based on lecture notes, important items from the required texts and class discussions and will consist of identifications/definitions and short explanation questions. Failure to take an examination will result in an "F" for the exam.

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

Public Relations Plan, Due April 14, 2009

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

Media Kit, Due April 28, 2009

For the second project, each group must create a complete media kit based on the group's PR Plan, suitable for release either directly to media or at a news conference.

Three copies of each project are due:

- 1 One copy is reviewed, graded and returned to student group leader.
- 1 The professor keeps one revised copy.
- 1 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. In addition, 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:

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, home and cell phone numbers. If you choose to call me at home, please do so before 9 p.m. during the week. If you get my message machine at home or my voicemail at work or on my cell, leave a message and I will get back to you within 24 hours, guaranteed. If you wish, you may send e-mail to farbman@tcnj.edu.

Remember, there is no such thing as luck. You either make the most of this class experience, or you don't. The choice is yours.