

Public Relations Research
JOUR3410-01
Fall 2011
2:20-3:40PM/MW/Room 112

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COURSE-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Identifying, characterizing and evaluating stakeholder groups and alternative channels of communication; formal research procedures include sampling, instrument design, information gathering, data processing, analysis and reporting.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH:

- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

PREREQUISITE: None

TEXTBOOKS:

Moderating Focus Groups: A practical guide for group facilitation by Thomas L. Greenbaum, (Los Angeles: Sage Publications). 2000 (first edition).

How to Conduct Surveys: A step by step guide by Arlene Fink, (Los Angeles: Sage Publications). 2009 (fourth edition).

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

Cognitive Objectives To Be Mastered (Ability To Explain, Analyze, Understand, Think Critically):

Students will learn to:

- describe **preliminary and detailed research procedures** in the behavioral and communication sciences.
- describe **environmental assessment processes** and their use in strategic planning.
- describe how to organize, moderate and use information obtained from a **focus group**.
- describe how to organize, moderate and use information obtained from an **interview**.
- explain **survey research techniques**, including sampling, interviewing and instrument construction.
- describe the tools used to **analyze the results of survey** research.
- describe **work groups** and ways to make them effective.

Performance Standards To Be Met (Demonstrable Skills, Abilities, Techniques, Applied Competencies):

At the end of the semester students should meet the following performance standards:

- select and apply **appropriate research tools** in support of public relations objectives.
- design and conduct **preliminary research** using libraries, company records and computer databases.
- **work effectively in a work group.**
- frame a research question.
- **construct an SPSS file** appropriate to your survey form.
- correctly enter data into SPSS.
- print out **frequencies and do Chi Square** comparisons.
- determine **levels of significance for compared variables.**
- analyze the **results of survey** research.
- communicate the **results in a final report/presentation.**

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH:

The class is designed to develop the skills necessary to design and execute public relations research for a client. During the class students will work independently and in teams. Teams of students will be assigned a non-profit client in the community with which to work.

Awareness:

- Learn about the important role of research in public relations.

Understanding:

- Understand how to conduct, analyze and present research findings.

Application:

- Conduct public relations research to include: interviewing clients to assess needs; writing research questions; develop strategies for research implementation; client relationship building to gain input and approvals; instrument design; conduct research; use standard methods for documentation; analyze data; draw conclusions based on data; write research report; present research to client.

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

The class will include lecture, discussion and group work.

GRADING:

- Participation / contribution 20% (as determined by your group)
 - Quizzes and Assignments 25%
 - Final project 50%
 - Final presentation to client 5%
- 100%

Your **project** will be graded holistically. I will consider the difficulty of the project, the preliminary research you present, the way you communicate your work and the overall appearance of your report. Here's how you should understand the grade:

- 90 - 100 **Outstanding.** Exceptional performance that shows a combination of breadth, depth, subject competence and innovativeness. Student demonstrates superior knowledge and skill in content, written expression and layout.
- 80 - 89 **Above average.** Performance that shows subject competence, as well as breadth, depth or innovation beyond the level of a third year journalism student.
- 70 - 79 **Satisfactory.** Meets minimum performance expected of a third year student. Performance is adequate.
- 60 - 69 **Poor.** Performance is below that of a competent third year journalism student. Work would not be acceptable in public relations practice.
- 59 and below. **Unacceptable.** Work shows major deficiencies in one or more areas.

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:

<i>Week</i>	<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Quiz & Assignment Schedule</i>
1 & 2	Read Teams Handout Read Greenbaum 1-5 Complete Research Assignment	
3	Read Greenbaum 6-10	Quiz Teams Handout Mon Sept 12 th Research Assignment Due in class Mon Sept 12 th Quiz Greenbaum 1- 5 Wed Sept 14 th
4	Read Greenbaum 11-13	Quiz Greenbaum 6-10 Wed Sept 21 st Team: Turn in Approval Report
5	Read Fink 1 and 4	Quiz Greenbaum 11-13 Wed Sept 28 th Team: Turn in Proposed Research Questions
7	Read Fink 2-3	Quiz Fink 1 and 4 Wed Oct 12 th
8		Team: Turn in Draft Situational Analysis Wed Oct 19 th
9	Read Fink 5-6	Quiz Fink 2-3 Wed Oct 26 th
10		Quiz Fink 5-6 Wed Nov 2 nd Team: Turn in Survey Instrument for Approval
11	Complete SPSS Exercise	SPSS Exercise Wed Nov 9 th Team: Turn in Draft Method Research Procedures
12 & 13	Analyze data	Team: Work on client research, review data for SPSS analysis.
14 & 15	Create Report	Team: Work on conclusions and recommendations for project. Create PowerPoint presentation for client meeting Wed Dec 14 th 1pm to 3pm
16		Team: Present research findings to client and class on Wed Dec 14 th 1pm to 3pm. Turn in full final report, consent forms, PowerPoint, survey instruments and SPSS file to instructor.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

EMAIL:

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

CELLPHONES:

You must turn them off during class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence due to illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Services at (901) 678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

EXIT EXAM FOR ALL JOURNALISM MAJORS:

All Journalism majors are required to take the Journalism Exit Exam their last semester before graduation. Please contact the Journalism office staff anytime during the semester to sign up. You may take the test anytime there are open lab hours during the semester. You will not be certified to graduate until you have completed the test.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be to

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation.

Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- Awareness: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- Understanding: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- Application: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

