

**Organizational Public Relations**

JOUR 7440-01

Spring 2012

5:30 – 8:30 p.m. / Wednesdays / MJ 106

Instructor: Dr. Rick Fischer  
Office: Meeman 306  
Office: (901) 678-2853  
E-mail: rfischer@memphis.edu

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS****CATALOGUE/COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

How organizations maintain rapport with their publics and the mass media by effectively communicating long-range goals.

**PREREQUISITE:**

Graduate status

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Argenti, P. A. (2009). *Corporate communication*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Zaremba, A. J. (2010). *Crisis communication: Theory and practice*. New York: M. E. Sharpe.

**CLASSROOM FORMAT:**

Seminar

**GRADING:**

Grading for the course will be as follows:

Paper #1	51 percent
Five cases and two “applying principles.”	49 percent
Each paper is worth 7% of category.	

Students taking this class for doctoral work should prepare a paper suitable for a paper competition at an academic conference.

**TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:**

---

Jan 18 Welcome.

Organizational environment

- Syllabus (by e-mail)
- Four-step process (by e-mail)

Readings: Corporate communication, chap 1  
Poss. supplemental readings by e-mail

---

Jan 25            Strategy. Process.

Readings:        Corporate Communication, chaps 2 – 3  
                     Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter:

---

Feb 1            Identity, image and reputation. CSR.

Readings:        Corporate Communication, chaps 4 – 5  
                     Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter:

---

Feb 8            Internal communications.

Readings:        Corporate Communication, chaps 7  
                     Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter:

---

Feb 15          Media relations. Investor relations.

Readings:        Corporate Communication, chaps 6, 8  
                     Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter:

Feb 22	Government relations. Crisis communication.  Readings: Corporate Communication, chaps 9 – 10 Supplemental readings by e-mail  Lead presenter:
Feb 29	Paper presentations (yours) Turn in first major paper
Mar 7	<b><i>Spring break</i></b>
Mar 14	Open Topics/topic potluck Bring an article to share. Present to group.
Mar 21	Foundations  Readings: Crisis Communication, chap 1 Supplemental readings by e-mail Watch video about Tennessee Tech shooting at:  <a href="http://hosted.mediasite.com/mediasite/Viewer/?peid=c47e5523fd82408488971f75f3361a99">http://hosted.mediasite.com/mediasite/Viewer/?peid=c47e5523fd82408488971f75f3361a99</a>  Turn in: “apply the principles” (p. 7-8) on <b>one</b> of the 16 stories (pp. 3 – 6)
Mar 28	Defining a crisis  Readings: Crisis Communication, chap 2 Supplemental readings by e-mail  Lead presenter: _____  Turn in: “Apply the principles” (pp. 41-2). Pick <b>one</b> scenario (p. 42)
Apr 4	Organizational theory and crisis comm.  Readings: Crisis Communication, chap 3 Supplemental readings by e-mail  Lead presenter: _____  Turn in: Case 3.1
Apr 11	Planning  Readings: Crisis Communication, chap 4

Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in: Case 4.1

---

Apr 18 Responding and ethics

Readings: Crisis Communication, chaps 5 – 6  
Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in: Case 5.1

---

April 25 Teams and spokesperson training

Readings: Crisis Communication, chaps 7 – 8  
Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in: Case 7.1 Omit questions relating to the “team.”

---

May 2 Wrapup.

**Readings:** Crisis Communication, chap 9  
Supplemental readings by e-mail

Lead presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in: Case 9.1

Notes:

1. We may change the syllabus by mutual agreement.
2. Full credit can be given only to assignments turned in on time (or earlier).

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### Specific Course Requirements:

This is a seminar course in which students are expected to “come to class” prepared to discuss assigned readings and other topics that may be identified from time to time by the

instructor. The instructor will give quizzes at the start of class if needed to enforce this expectation. If needed we can add quizzes that will count for 10% of the final grade.

**Major Paper and Cases** — In lieu of mid-term and final examinations, students will complete one major paper and seven cases.

You can think about papers like this as falling into one of two categories. **One** is a paper that ties together the literature in an area for YOUR understanding. It often leads to a project or thesis proposal or adds to a lit review for a project or thesis. The **other** area is a paper that offers a new insight, provides a carefully crafted argument in an area of controversy, provides a case study, or original research (if time allowed). Only the second type are candidates for a conference paper or journal or PR Institute.

There will be deductions for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and APA style.

The first paper will be due on or before March 14th.

Plan on having your paper reviewed in Turnitin.com. You will receive info on how to access this site later in the course.

The standard style guide for graduate work in the journalism department (except law and history) is APA 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>. No abstract age needed. Free APA Guide:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> This site can get you started, but it is not a substitute for checking with the official manual.

An APA 6<sup>th</sup> tutorial is at: <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>

Note: the paper should consist of at least 12 pages of text plus bibliographic citations. No more than 25 percent of bibliographic citations should deal with material from the Internet. Journal articles obtained through online sources are still journal articles (to me).

Differences between APA 5 and 6<sup>th</sup> are at:

<http://owl.massey.ac.nz/referencing/apa-5th-vs-6th-edition.php>

See also: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**Additional requirements for doctoral students:** In addition to all other specified work, graduate students will make an original contribution such that the paper would be a strong candidate for acceptance as a conference paper.

**Class discussion/presentation:**

1. Class discussion will focus on the readings indicated for that topic noted later in the syllabus. When you are the designated discussant, it will be your job to lead the discussion about that which you found particularly interesting, illuminating, or useful. You may want to do additional reading to provide a context for your material.
2. Discussants will be assigned for each reading before the first day of class.

REFERENCES OF INTEREST

<http://www.prsa.org/intelligence/businesscase> The business case for public relations is on the Public Relations Society of America Web site. It includes articles, case studies, guidance for measuring results, and suggested readings.

Institute for Public Relations Essential Knowledge Project

[search for Essential Knowledge Project]

This site is useful for the latest in professional reading. All the papers are free.

UK PR Institute

<http://www.cipr.co.uk/>

PRSA SilverAnvil awards site

<http://prcsearch.prsa.org/dbtw-wpd/Textbase/PPCNEW/silveranvil.htm>

PR Quickstart – overview of profession

<http://www.prquickstart.org/>

Courtesy of our friends at Massey University, New Zealand, visit the online journal Praxis at:

<http://www.prismjournal.org/> Under “Features” (at top) click on PRism Journal.

Visit the Public Relations (online) Journal: [www.prsa.org/prjournal](http://www.prsa.org/prjournal) Also free.

## ASSESSMENT

### PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR 7440 / 8440:

- 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.

### HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

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

*Application:*

- Show consideration for diversity in audience analysis in paper and cases.
- Show consideration of mass communication theories in paper and cases.
- Incorporate ethical principles, as appropriate, into written assignments.
- Apply critical thinking to class discussion and written assignments.
- Incorporate original research into class presentations and written assignments.
- Apply appropriate styles in writing assignments.
- Polish and proof written work.
- Apply numerical and statistical concepts, as needed, in written assignments.
- Use appropriate tools to produce written assignments.

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

- Write a major paper as described later in this syllabus.
- Complete cases in crisis communication, as assigned.
- Lead class discussion on chapters / topics, as assigned.

**HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR JOUR 7440:**

*Awareness:*

- Become aware of the public relations process.

*Understanding:*

- Conceptualize and apply appropriate models of the organization and of public relations.
- Analyze the administrative needs of public relations departments and consultancies with an emphasis on internal relations and crisis communications.
- Prescribe solutions to problems arising in the administration of these organizations.

*Application:*

- Lead the class discussion on topics as assigned throughout the semester.
- Write an original paper on a topic related to organizational public relations.
- Complete and turn in seven cases on crisis communication.

**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.

## **DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **E-MAIL:**

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