

Public Relations Case Studies

PBRL 3409-M50

Fall 2017

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Case studies and typical public relations problems; planning and preparation of communications materials for various media; application of public relations techniques.

PREREQUISITE:

PBRL 3400

TEXTBOOK:

Cases in Public Relations Management, Second Edition by Swann, P. (New York: Routledge). ISBN: 978-0-415-51771-3

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format. In other words, we have no scheduled meeting time. This can be convenient for you, but it also means that it is essential for you to be an organized, motivated student.

You must have internet access and Microsoft Word to generate a “.doc” or “.docx” extension. All assignments **MUST** be filed in a “.doc” or “.docx” format; type must be double-spaced with indented paragraphs.

ACCESSING THE COURSE WEBSITE:

1. Go to the University of Memphis home page: <http://www.memphis.edu>. **The course page will be available Aug. 28 – Dec. 14.**
2. Click on the “MyMemphis” link at the bottom of the left column menu.
3. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
4. Click on the “eCampus Resources” tab.
5. In the center column of the page, click on the blue UofM eCourseware link
6. Down on that page, in the Fall 2017 course list available to you, click on the link for Public Relations Case Studies to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

MEDIA DIET:

As you know, the very nature of our profession requires us to stay on top of current events. Our responsibility is to assess their relevance to — and their implications for — our clients and employers. Knowledge of current events, government, history and media is critical. While your undergraduate education will provide a strong base of understanding in these areas, your proactive efforts to continue learning about them will greatly benefit your career.

It is imperative that you read a variety of local and national news sources (print and online) as well as PR trade publications (e.g., *Public Relations Tactics*, *PR News*) and become actively engaged in social media conversations. The new media landscape has changed public relations, and you must adapt. You must know where your target public(s) is finding its news.

COURSEWORK:

Course work will be accomplished every week. Each assignment must be completed by its due date and time (Central Standard Time), which varies by assignment. Check each due time to ensure that you post by the deadline. Five quizzes will be part of your final grade.

Other parts of your grade will come from participation, homework assignments, class reports, individual case study reports, group work and a final issues and strategy report. These assignments, discussions and case studies must be submitted per instructions; no credit will be given outside of the proper submission guidelines.

All papers submitted will be considered final. There will be no re-submission of papers to increase the initial grade given. It is your responsibility to ensure clarification of assignment instructions.

All written work must reflect critical thinking and knowledge of the material; that is, examples found within or outside of class, along with elaboration, are required to achieve an “A” grade. In all our assignments, it is noted that elaboration is required.

DEADLINES:

Understanding and working with deadlines is a critical part of the public relations process. No late assignments will be accepted without prior approval of your instructor.

GRADING:

There are 1,200 possible points in this class. At the end of the semester, your class average will be calculated and fractions will be rounded to the nearest whole number. Letter grades will be determined according to the scale below:

Quizzes (50 points each x 5)	250 points
Discussion Board Participation (25 points each week)	300 points
Case Study Homework Assignments (20 points each x 10)	200 points
Current PR Case Study Paper	250 points
Outside Case Study Analysis (50 points each x 3)	150 points
Twitter Assignment	50 points
Total	1,200 points

1167 – 1200 = A+	1067 – 1099 = B+	967 – 999 = C+	867 – 899 = D+
1130 – 1166 = A	1030 – 1066 = B	930 – 966 = C	830 – 866 = D
1100 – 1129 = A-	1000 – 1029 = B-	900 – 929 = C-	800 – 829 = D-
			below 800 = F

COURSE SCHEDULE

This is a basic schedule for topics and major assignments over the course of the semester. Although every effort will be made to stick with this schedule, please understand that changes to the schedule may occur. All changes will be announced as soon as they are known.

Week One ***Course Introduction/The basics/Why Case Studies?***

Aug. 28 – Sept. 1 Online orientation module
 Read CH1, pages 1 – 15
 Read Appendix C, pages 559 – 561
 Read Appendix D, pages 563 – 567
 Read Appendix F, pages 571 - 573
 PR, communication and related theories
 Ways organizations communicate
 Organizational Responses
 Other reading will be posted on eCourseware
 Current PR Case Study Paper (Assignment)

Week Two ***Ethics and Law (CH 2)***

Sept. 4 Labor Day

Sept. 5 – 8 Read Appendix G, pages 575 - 581
 Read CH 2, pages 16-31
 PRSA Code of Ethics
 What would you do? (Assignment)
 Case Study 2 (Assignment)
WHAT WOULD YOU DO DUE
CASE STUDY 2 ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week Three ***Corporate Social Responsibility (CH 3)***

Sept. 11 – 15 Read CH 3, pages 39 – 42, 66-80
 Case Study 5 (Assignment)
DISCUSSIONS FROM CH 2 POSTS
CASE STUDY 5 ASSIGNMENT DUE
Quiz 1

Week Four	Media Relations (CH 4)
Sept. 18 – 22	Read CH 4, pages 94 – 100, 133 – 143 Case Study 9 (Assignment) DISCUSSIONS FROM CH 3 POSTS CASE STUDY 9 ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week Five	Conflict Management (CH 5)
Sept. 25 – 29	Read CH 5, pages 154 – 161, 183 – 201 Case Study 12 (Assignment) DISCUSSIONS FROM CH 4 POSTS CASE STUDY 12 ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week Six	Activism (CH 6)
Oct. 2 – 6	Read CH 6, pages 226 – 230, 248 - 255 Read Appendix B, pages 555 – 558 Case Study 15 (Assignment) Outside Case Study TBD (Assignment) DISCUSSION FROM CH 5 POSTS CASE STUDY 15 ASSIGNMENT DUE Quiz 2
Week Seven	Consumer Relations (CH 7)
Oct. 9 – 13	Read CH 7, pages 277 – 279, 348 – 359 Case Study 22 (Assignment) DISCUSSION FROM CH 6 POSTS CASE STUDY 22 ASSIGNMENT DUE
Oct. 14 – 17	<i>Fall Break</i>
Week Eight	Current PR Case Study Mid-Term Check / Work Week
Oct. 18 – 20	DISCUSSION FROM CH 7 POSTS OUTSIDE CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
Week Nine	Entertainment & Leisure (CH 8)
Oct. 23 – 27	Read CH 8, pages 360 – 364, 403 – 415 Case Study 25 (Assignment) Outside Case Study TBD (Assignment) CASE STUDY 25 ASSIGNMENT DUE Quiz 3

Week 10	Community Relations (CH 9)
Oct. 30 – Nov. 3	Read CH 9, pages 422 – 424, 445 – 454 Case Study 28 (Assignment) DISCUSSION FROM CH 8 POSTS CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT 28 DUE
Week 11	Cultural & Other Considerations (CH 10)
Nov. 6 – 10	Read CH 10, pages 462 – 488 Case Study 30 (Assignment) DISCUSSIONS FROM CH 9 POSTS CASE STUDY 30 ASSIGNMENT DUE OUTSIDE CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
Week 12	Financial Communications & Investor Relations (CH 11)
Nov. 13 – 17	Read CH 11, pages 528 – 534 Case Study TBD (Assignment) Outside Case Study TBD (Assignment) DISCUSSION FROM CH 10 POSTS Quiz 4
Week 13	CURRENT PR CASE STUDY PAPER WORK WEEK
Nov. 20 - 21	CH 11 CASE STUDY TBD ASSIGNMENT DUE
Nov. 22 – 26	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
Week 14	TBD
Nov. 27 – Dec. 1	Reading TBD OUTSIDE CASE STUDY 3 ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week 15	Wrapping up
Dec. 4 – 6	Quiz 5 CURRENT PR CASE STUDY PAPER DUE (Dec. 6)

FIVE PILLARS OF PBRL3409

- *Professionalism*: Students learn the professional and ethical standards of the public relations industry by discussing current events and case examples.
- *Writing*: Students focus on the application of the four-step process of public relations. Students dissect cases, identify each step in the process and discuss, write case briefs or present the ramifications.
- *Multimedia*: Students participate in Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Twitter chats and learn how to effectively manage their own social media.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students demonstrate an understanding of each step in the public relations process through case analysis.
- *Media Literacy*: Students increase their media literacy by looking at previous events where public relations affected the outcome. Students discuss each step in the public relations process and their impact.

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR PBRL3409:

- 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 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 communication.
- 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.

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically):

- Apply knowledge of public relations theories and concepts in various professional settings to build problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Develop counseling and peer feedback skills
- Build teamwork skills
- Distinguish between goals, objectives, strategies and tactics using the case method: diagnosing public relations problems and suggesting solutions with detailed messages, timelines, budgets and details

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies):

- Understand and discuss how different public relations processes lead to difficult outcomes in various professional settings
- Successfully analyze and prescribe solutions for text and contemporary problems
- Work in teams to plan solutions focusing on goals, objectives, strategies and tactics
- Offer constructive criticism by evaluating the work of their peers on a group project

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR PBRL3409:

Awareness:

- Learn how public relations opportunities and problematic issues are forecasted, identified and managed in today's media environment

Understanding:

- Identify opportunities and solve public relation problems
- Define publics, paying special attention to diversity among organizational constituencies and the implications of diversity in the development of public relations plans
- Examine motivators among publics, stakeholders, and organizations and understand how that affects message content
- Recognize appropriate message content and media platform selection while conforming to budgetary limitations
- Understand public relations practitioners are advocates for clients, but must operate within ethical guidelines

Application:

- Read textbook chapter materials and engage in meaningful class discussion about the topics
- Review textbook or contemporary cases and answer accompanying questions, submitting individually written assessments or delivering case presentations. Each assessment or presentation will be graded
- Execute quality group work, contributing in meaningful ways to the group's success. This work will be graded (including a peer grade)
- Develop a public relations industry-news diet, keeping abreast of contemporary cases as they unfold and engaging in discussion on the topics in class, or in Twitter chats or Slack channels
- Complete periodic exams covering textbook materials and contemporary case problems

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

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.

MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. 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 because of 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 and Strategic Media 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.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

"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.

DEADLINES:

Remember there's a reason "DEAD" makes up half the word "deadline." All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

DISABILITY:

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

DIVERSITY:

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

WEATHER POLICY:

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.