

Intro to Public Relations

PBRL 3400-M51

Spring 2021

Class meeting: online asynchronous (no Zoom or on campus meetings; everything is on eCourseware)

Melissa L. Janoske McLean, Ph.D.

Office: 306 Meeman Journalism Building

Office Hours: MW 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., TR 1-3 p.m., and by appointment

Google Voice: (901) 504-6502 (dialing this number works just like a regular phone call)

Email: mljnoske@memphis.edu (strong preference for communication)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Development, scope, and modern role of public relations; emphasis on problem solving, lectures, and application of major public relations tools and practices.

Class discussion will involve the history, contemporary status, and future of the public relations field, along with the public relations four-step process.

Prerequisites

None

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Required: Wilcox, D.L., Cameron, G. T. & Reber, B.H. (2016). *Public relations: Strategies and tactics* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

You are required to purchase the REVEL version of the textbook, as you will be assigned reading, writing, and other homework activities in REVEL.

While access to REVEL is required, **the printed version of this text is optional** – see purchasing options below. There are three ways to purchase REVEL access, so choose the option that works best for you:

Option #1: Purchase a REVEL access code from the campus bookstore.

Option #2: Online Instant Access: If you decide not to purchase REVEL from the bookstore, you can purchase REVEL access online. You will see this as an option after clicking on the course invite link that you will receive prior to the beginning of the semester from your instructor.

Option #3: When you register (via access code or online instant access), you also have the option of adding the print upgrade for \$19.95 extra (no shipping cost).

Recommended Text

The Associated Press Stylebook 2016 (or 2015). New York: Basic Books.

Classroom Format

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format, which means that you will work at your own pace each week to cover the lecture, material, and assignments. The professor is available to answer any questions via email, and will make announcements each week regarding the content, preparing you for upcoming work, and other class necessities. The professor will post to eCourseware every Monday with plans for that week, discussion of topics covered, and reminders about assignments. It is your responsibility to keep up with these notes and all of the information contained within. Work for each week will be due Sunday nights at 11:59 p.m. Central.

Students will write and submit assignments that will be returned with feedback via eCourseware meant to encourage student improvement over the course of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss any questions or writing struggles with me as they become evident.

All work and papers submitted must reflect critical thinking and knowledge of the material. In all our assignments, elaboration and examples (either from the text or elsewhere) are required. Items given as facts in elaboration must be referenced using APA referencing criteria (see below for APA citation resources). Written assignments will be graded on content AND grammar, spelling, punctuation, and AP style (GSPS). Please refer to the grading rubrics on eCourseware for complete details.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for PBRL 3400 – M51 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

Two exams will be part of your final grade. Tests will contain one or more units of study and consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions. Tests will be limited as to time. The computer will cut you off at the end of the prescribed time period, regardless of whether or not you have completed all questions. You may use your text to confirm an answer, but be aware that time limits will not allow you to spend much time flipping through the text. You should read and be familiar with each section before taking its test.

Quality of Work

All work in this course should follow AP Style, including proper spelling, grammar, and language. A large part of journalism and strategic media is having a polished written concept of what you are communicating. This includes all class work and presentations. Problems in these or other areas will result in the deduction of points.

I expect your work to be good and to be yours. What is not yours should be fully cited. In documenting sources you must use APA formatting. If you need help with writing and citing sources, please see me for resources. In addition, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab is an excellent resource, and can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>.

I am willing to read over and provide comments/edits on rough drafts of all work, but require a minimum of 24 hours for turnaround (longer over a weekend). This should be done via email, not eCourseware.

Repetition of Courses and Coursework

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the resume and logo).

Questions about Grades

If you would like to ask about a grade, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class time, as I will not discuss grades during class. If you have a question or problem with a grade, exam question, or assignment, you have 48 hours after the assignment is returned to you to contact me, or the grade stands. Your question or appeal must be stated in writing, citing your position and why you feel the mark is incorrect. The appeal should be turned in to the professor or sent via email within the stated time frame.

Additionally, you are responsible for tracking your grade online and meeting with the professor early in the semester if you are concerned about your overall grade. Meeting with the professor early and often can help both parties involved find ways to improve student-instructor understanding and quality of work.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. This is a professional program for strategic communicators 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.

Late work will be accepted, but points will be deducted for lateness. The absolute final day to turn in any late work will be at the end of the last full class day of the semester (11:59 p.m. Central on Tuesday, April 27, 2021). No work, late or otherwise, will be accepted beyond that date.

Student Resources

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, please visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the [Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support](#) (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. If you are comfortable doing so, please also let the instructor know you are experiencing challenges as they may be able to assist you in connecting with campus or community supports.

Grading

There are 650 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.

Exams (100 points each)	200 points
PR News Report	75 points
PR Specialty Paper	75 points
Case Study	100 points
Class Participation (Discussion Board)	70 points
Revel Assignments	130 points
Total	650 points

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%
B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%
C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%
D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%
F 0-59.4%

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 some material may require more or less discussion and class time. Thus, changes to the schedule may occur. All changes will be announced in class.

Week 1, March 10-14: What is Public Relations?

****March 8-9 UofM Wellness Break****

Class Introduction, Syllabus Review, REVEL Review

Readings: Chapter 1

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL quiz; Sign up for a week to present your News Report

Week 2, March 15-21: The Evolution of PR & PR Departments and Firms

Readings: Chapters 2 & 4

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes

Week 3, March 22-28: Ethics & Professionalism/Diversity in PR

News Report Presentations begin this week

Readings: Chapters 3 & 11

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes; Case Study organization due

Week 4, March 29-April 4: Research & Planning

This week kicks off a series on the Public Relations RACE model

Readings: Chapters 5 & 6

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes; Midterm Exam

Week 5, April 5-11: Communication & Evaluation

Readings: Chapters 7 & 8

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes

Week 6, April 12-18: Persuasion & Conflict

Readings: Chapters 9 & 10

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes; PR Specialty paper due

Week 7, April 19-25: Social Media; Entertainment, Sports, & Tourism

Readings: Chapters 13 & 18

Assignments: Discussion Board; REVEL Quizzes

Week 8, April 26-27: Wrap Up and Final Exam

Assignments: Extra credit due; case study due; all late work due by 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, April 27.

Absolutely no work will be accepted beyond this point.

The final exam is to be completed online on eCourseware any time from the last day of class until Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. Central. Students will have 120 minutes (2 hours) to complete their exam.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Five Pillars in PBRL 3400

- *Critical Thinking:* Students must demonstrate an understanding of the importance of analyzing the needs, values, and attitudes of all stakeholder groups to determine the appropriate public relations strategies to implement.
- *Media Literacy:* Students learn the vocabulary and tools of the public relations industry. Students learn how to communicate with different media outlets and the importance of selecting the appropriate media to communicate with the intended audience.
- *Multimedia:* Students learn how public relations professionals use multimedia communication and visual storytelling through class discussion and assignments that examine real-world multimedia public relations tactics.
- *Professionalism:* Students learn the professional standards and strategies of the public relations industry by discussing and participating in PR activity simulations, learning public relations theory and history, and learning industry vocabulary. Finally, in small groups, students apply public relations theory and principles to analyze how public relations is practiced in a local organization

and write a team case study paper and present it to the class.

- *Writing:* Students develop writing skills related to strategic planning, crisis communication, positioning and platform specific media requirements.

Professional values and competencies for PBRL 3400

- 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 communication.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communication 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.

How professional values and competencies will be met

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

- Understand the definition of public relations and recognize how public relations differs from other management functions.
- Explain how public relations evolved in the United States.
- Understand the activities of public relations—what PR people do—and understand the public relations process—research, planning, implementation/communication, and evaluation.
- Recognize the importance of understanding the diversity (gender, race, ethnicity, etc.) of stakeholder groups and audience to determining the appropriate public relations strategies to implement.
- Recognize that not only do organizations operate and communicate on a global level but also that our local communities are becoming more diverse and that understanding the diversity of peoples and cultures is important to determining the appropriate public relations strategies to implement.
- Explain the major public relations theories and how they are used to inform the practice of public relations.
- Identify and understand the ethical implications of the practice of public relations, including freedoms of speech and the press.

- Recognize how to conduct public relations research to inform and evaluate public relations campaigns.

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

- Earn a passing score on periodic exams and quizzes.
- Work a public relations problem within an ethical framework.
- Write measurable objectives necessary to successful application of the public relations four-step process.
- Analyze a current issue related to public relations using public relations theory and present an oral report to the class.
- Write three critical analysis papers on topics related to public relations.
- Research and analyze how public relations is practiced in a local organization.
- Write a public relations case study report and present it to the class.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Learn what modern public relations is, how it differs from other management functions and how it has evolved in the United States
- Learn what a public relations professional does within an agency or organization
- Learn the four-step process of public relations
- Learn about the role of diversity in the field of public relations
- Learn public relations theories and how they are used to inform the practice of public relations
- Learn about the ethical implications of the practice of public relations
- Learn how to conduct public relations research to inform and evaluate public relations campaigns

Understanding

- Understand the role of public relations and how it differs from other management functions
- Understand the four-step process of public relations
- Recognize the importance of diversity in the field of public relations
- Understand public relations theories and how they are used to inform the practice of public relations
- Recognize the ethical implications of the practice of public relations
- Understand how research is conducted to inform and evaluate public relations campaigns

Application

- Work a public relations problem within an ethical framework
- Write measurable objectives necessary to successful application of the public relations four-step process
- Analyze a current issue related to public relations using public relations theory and present an oral report to the class
- Analyze current topics related to public relations

- Research and analyze how public relations is practiced in a local organization
- Write a group public relations case study report that applies the public relations four-step process and present it to the class

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA 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 graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or SquareSpace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they 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 lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

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 writing 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

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for

their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class 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).

Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

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 students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media 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 rating originality of your ideas. Also, to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the 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 must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

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. Media 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.

Student support

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

COVID-19 protocols for this course

Student Accommodations

Students with accessibility issues or learning accommodation issues due to a disability should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to submit an official request for course accommodations. Contact DRS at 901.678.2880 or at drs@memphis.edu. (<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/index.php>)

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly, through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class in addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed through the regular institutional disciplinary procedures. (<https://www.memphis.edu/osa/students/academic-misconduct.php>)

Student Health

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@memphis.edu.

Student Resources

Students who need additional resources can visit the Dean of Students Office website at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.

Guidelines for classes, labs and equipment in Meeman Journalism Building in Spring 2021

- Anyone feeling sick should stay home and join class virtually.
- Social distance from all others at least 6 feet.
- Wear a mask at all times when in University buildings and on campus.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer regularly.
- No more than one person in the elevator at a time.
- Disinfect your workstation before and after use, including desks, keyboards, mice and screens. Wash your hands after cleaning.
- Have phone or Zoom meetings with professors and classmates. Do not meet face to face, if possible.