

Intro to Public Relations

PBRL 3400-M90

Fall 2022

Online

Prof. Tori Cliff

Office: virtual via Zoom or phone

Office Hours: TR 9-11 a.m. and by appointment.

Book appointments: [click here](#)

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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.

Prerequisites

None

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Kim, C. M. (2019). *Public Relations: Competencies and Practice (1st edition)*. New York: Routledge.

Classroom Format

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format. In other words, there is no required scheduled meeting time for this course. This can be convenient for students juggling several responsibilities, but it also means you must be organized and motivated. Students are able to work at their own pace throughout the week, however, work will be due on a weekly basis and it is imperative to stay on track with the course schedule to complete all deadlines on time.

All course discussions should remain respectful and professional, and show respect to all people regardless of background, sex, race, or any other factor. Hate speech will not be tolerated in any form and could result in being dropped from the class for misconduct. Remember: Public relations is all about creating and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships and our virtual classroom should be no different.

This class is meant to serve as an introduction to public relations and the fundamentals that PR is built upon. Our course content will include the pillars of public relations and the future of the field, as well as public relations processes. There will be an emphasis on social media, content creation, stewardship, stakeholder relationships, and leadership. We will also discuss different areas of public relations and application to other fields.

Students will upload all required assignments to Canvas, and feedback will be given to encourage student improvement. Access to a computer or an electronic device will be required. Please be sure to read the instructions for each assignment carefully, as requirements for each assignment will vary. Assignments being submitted via Canvas will all need to be submitted as a .doc file unless otherwise noted. Reach out

via email if anything is unclear to you. All assignments will be due Sunday nights at 11:59 p.m. central time unless otherwise noted. To allow time for response and clarification, please reach out with any assignment questions at least 48 hours prior to the deadline.

To succeed in this course, it's imperative to stay engaged in all coursework. If at any point you are concerned about your grade or struggling to grasp course concepts, I encourage you to make an appointment for a Zoom call during my office hours so we can work to find a good solution. Remember that in order for me to help you, communication is key.

If at any point in the semester you are struggling with the course load or a specific assignment, please reach out to me for a meeting so we can work to get you back on track. I'm happy to help in any way I'm able, but you must be an advocate for yourself. It's impossible for me to help if I don't know there's a problem.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis Canvas home page: <https://memphis.instructure.com/>
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 M90 to enter the course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course and Assignment Expectations

Course work will be accomplished every week, such as readings, discussion posts, presentations, and quizzes to check your learning and comprehension. Each assignment must be completed by its due date and time (Central Time), which may vary by assignment, so make sure to check each individual due date and time to ensure that you post by the deadline.

Quality of Work

All work in this course should represent your very best effort, including proper spelling and grammar. Writing should be concise and exhibit a clear understanding of the topic and critical thinking on the student's part. High-quality work is expected. If you quote anything directly or indirectly, please fully cite the information using in APA 7th edition format. If you need help with writing and citing sources, please visit the library or ask for help from the free 24/7 online tutoring center. In addition, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab is an excellent resource and can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>.

Questions about Grades

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

Plagiarism policy

First offense: Redo for 50%, warning

Second offense: Automatic 0, no redo

Third offense: Automatic class fail

*Any instances of plagiarism may result in a note being added to your department file.

Grading

Assignments, Activities, Exercises, Presentations = 50%

Quizzes = 50%

Discussion: There will be a discussion board available for students to discuss course topics with peers. Engaging in the discussion board activity is not required, but students may find it a useful resource. The discussion board will not be moderated by your professor and will not count as a grade. Think of it as a coffee house for the class. Stop by and chat if you like.

Honors Component

If you are taking this class as an honors class, you will need to fulfill the honors project requirement. For the honors project requirement, you will be able to choose from one of the following options:

1. Research paper explaining an issue or specific topic in PR; topic to be approved with instructor
2. Presentation covering a specific skillset in PR with actionable items on how to be successful; topic must be approved with instructor
3. Feature story that includes 3-5 interview sources based on what people think PR is/where the field is headed
4. Historical backgrounder about public relations that outlines major accomplishments, changes, and key players in the field of public relations
5. Organizational Media Audit

Students with disabilities & accommodations

If you will need accommodations through [Disability Resources](#) to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact DRS to obtain the accommodations necessary to complete this course successfully.

Trauma & Emotional Needs

I understand that outside of this course, you have many things going on that could add stress or take away attention from your school work. Please let me know if something comes up throughout the semester that is hindering your success with this course. I care about what is going on with you and I'm happy to help when I can. My door (and Zoom room) is always open to you.

I also recommend taking advantage of the free counseling services offered by the University of Memphis. Please see below for links that could be helpful for you.

Campus and Community Resources: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/>

Resources specific to physical health and wellness:

[Mental health Services](#)

[UofM Student Health Center](#)

[Sexual, domestic, and intimate partner violence resources](#)

Resources specific to housing and food insecurity: There are many resources available through the Dean of Students including:

[Dr. Rosie Phillips Bingham Student Emergency Fund](#)

[Emergency Food Resources](#), which includes [Tiger Pantry](#)

Academic Services:

[Writing Center](#)

[Tutoring](#)

Communities & Inclusion:

[Multicultural Affairs](#)

[LGBTQIA+](#)

COURSE SCHEDULE

This is a basic weekly 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 possible. All assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59 p.m. C.T. unless otherwise noted. Heads up--Quiz 4, our last quiz in the course, will be due on the last day of classes, which is Wed. Nov. 30.

Week 1, Aug. 22-28: Introduction

This week will cover Ch. 1 and all materials in the Getting Started and Week 1 folder

Readings: Ch. 1 and review any additional materials in the Getting Started and Week 1 folder in Canvas

Assignments: Start of Semester Survey Due NLY 11:59 p.m. Aug. 28

Week 2, Aug. 29-Sept. 4: Leadership

This week will cover Ch. 2 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 2 and review any additional materials in this week's folder in Canvas

Assignments: Begin working on Agency Profile Assignment (due NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 25)

Week 3, Sept. 5-11: Diversity and Inclusion

This week will cover Ch. 3 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 3

Assignments: Work on Agency Profile Assignment

Week 4, Sept. 12-18: Practicing Public Relations Across Cultures & Quiz 1 (covers chapters 1-4)

This week will cover Ch. 4 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 4

Assignments: Quiz 1 due NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 18

Week 5, Sept. 19-25: Public Relations Ethics: Responsibilities and Necessary Skills

This week will cover Ch. 5 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 5

Assignments: Due-Agency Profile Assignment NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 25

Week 6, Sept. 26-Oct. 2: Business Literacy: Thoughtful Awareness and Insightful Action in a Changing Workplace

This week will cover Ch. 6 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 6

Assignments: Begin working on Personal Digital Media Inventory Assignment (due NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 30)

Week 7, Oct. 3-9: Content Creation in Public Relations & Quiz 2 (covers chapters 5-7)

This week will cover Ch. 7 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 7

Assignments: Take Quiz 2 NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 9

Week 8, Oct. 10-16: Legal Considerations in Public Relations

This week will cover Ch. 8 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 8

Assignments: Work on Personal Digital Media Inventory Assignment

Week 7, Oct. 17-23: Measurement and Evaluation in Public Relations

This week will cover Ch. 9 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 9

Assignments: Work on Personal Digital Media Inventory Assignment

Week 7, Oct. 24-30: Crisis Management

This week will cover Ch. 10 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 10

Assignments: Due-Personal Digital Media Inventory Assignment NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 30

Week 7, Oct. 31-Nov. 6: Stewardship & Quiz 3 (covers chapters 8-11)

This week will cover Ch. 11 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 11

Assignments: Quiz 3 due NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6

Week 7, Nov. 7-13: Social Media in Public Relations

This week will cover Ch. 12 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 12

Assignments: Based on what you learned about Stewardship and Social Media in PR, begin the CSR Social Media Assignment (due NLT 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20)

Week 7, Nov. 14-20: Work-Life Balance

This week will cover Ch. 13 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 13

Assignments: Due- CSR Social Media Assignment

Week 7, Oct. 21-27: Media Relations

This week will cover Ch. 22 and all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Ch. 22

Assignments: Study

Week 7, Oct. 28-30: Course Wrap Up & Quiz 4 (covers chapters 12, 13, 22)

This week will cover all materials in this week's Canvas folder

Readings: Review and take quiz 4 on the last day of our course, Wed. Nov. 30. There is not a "final" in this class.

Assignments: Quiz 4 Due NLT 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 30

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in PBRL 3400

- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to 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)

- Identify the four-step public relations process and what activities exist within each step.
- Explain the variety of relationships between organizations, media and publics.
- Understand how new technology affects the media and communication.
- Understand what's involved in preparing for and advancing a career in public relations.
- Understand mass communication theories and their application to media professions.

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

- Read and critically reflect on assigned readings, podcasts, videos, etc.
- Demonstrate understanding of class concepts by earning passing scores on periodic tests and/or exams.
- Practice intellectual exchange of ideas with class and professor through meaningful discussion.
- Research, interpret and present findings to class.
- Analyze the impact of digital footprints on personal brands.
- Produce content for class utilizing appropriate technology.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Identify the historical and theoretical foundations of public relations.
- Recognize the importance of ethics.
- Examine the need for diversity in all areas of mass communication.

Understanding

- Recall the historical and theoretical foundations of public relations during class discussions, exercises, and on tests.
- Differentiate between ethical and unethical behavior through examination of PR ethical codes of conduct, situational exercises, and class discussions.
- Express the skills needed to excel in the public relations field.

Application

- Discuss course concepts with class demonstrating reflection and critical thinking.
- Complete assignments sharpening understanding of public relations, such as researching a public relations firm and presenting findings and interpretation of agency portfolio and website; analyzing personal digital media usage and reporting findings, including where and how changes could improve personal digital brand; and/or creating personal videography for use on YouTube.
- Complete several tests and exercises earning passing scores.

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 require 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

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they need to notify the Dean of Students Office at deanofstudents@memphis.edu and notify the University of their result. Faculty are expected to be accommodating with extra time for assignments; however, decisions will vary on a case-by-case basis according to the severity of the student's illness. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, students are encouraged to wear masks indoors, wash hands frequently and wipe down their workstations with sanitizing wipes before and after class.