

# Event Planning for Public Relations

STRM 4230-M90

Spring 2026

Online

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Office: Virtual

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Catalog description

Development, execution and evaluation of events that support strategic communication goals. Special attention will be given to the needs of the public relations industry. Hands-on experience will be integrated into the curriculum.

### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Leeanne Bell McManus, Chip Rouse, & Verni, S. (2024). *Event planning and management: communicating theory & practice* (3rd ed.). Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

### Classroom format

This is an asynchronous online class. We will not meet for class, but I am but an email away. Numerous learning tools will be used, such as mini-video lecture, textbook and articles, slide decks, audio feedback, discussion board interaction, and independent and (perhaps) group work, all designed to encourage students to synthesize the culmination of their learning. Work will be accomplished using various digital platforms/programs, including Canvas, Teams, Word, Google Drive, PowerPoint, Slack, Microsoft Project, and YouTube. Students will also be asked to take photos and/or video of events that they attend or orchestrate. A smartphone is adequate. If you do not have this technology or a camera, please contact me via email right away so we can see if the department can supply you with a loner.

### Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis home page: <https://www.memphis.edu>
2. Click on Canvas from menu located at bottom left of homepage
3. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
4. Click on the link for STRM 4230 to enter our course

### Course Requirements

This course will require access to technology, diligence in engaging each week's content, organization, communication and time management. I recommend adding reminders for all deadlines in the class on your tech device and turning notifications on in Canvas, especially announcements. You should log into the course in Canvas a minimum of twice weekly to stay up

to date on news and to engage the content appropriately. Also, please check your email in the morning each weekday.

The overall requirements for this course include these elements:

1. Complete assigned readings each week;
2. Log in to the class a minimum of twice weekly to engage content and stay up-to-date;
3. Check campus email each weekday morning;
4. Complete all work on or before deadline and with excellence;
5. Do well on class quizzes;
6. Be respectful of classmates and professor at all times; and
7. Communicate with the professor about any questions or concerns as they arise.

Event attendance requirements include:

STRM 4230:

1. Attend a minimum of 5 campus, community, or virtual events and complete corresponding assignment

STRM 6230 or honors contract students:

1. Attend a minimum of five campus, community, or virtual events and complete corresponding assignments
2. Assist in planning a minimum of one campus, virtual or community event and complete corresponding assignment

Note: There are due dates for the Event Attendance Assignments, however, as long as you turn them in on or before each deadline, and the event occurred during this semester, you can submit them as it works best for you. For example, perhaps the second week of classes you have a chance to attend 3 events, feel free to complete the corresponding 3 Event Attendance Assignments and turn in all three at that time. It is fine if you are early, just not if you are late. For the community event requirements, if a student is attending a virtual event or traveling, then it can be from any community of interest globally, just include that information on the assignment sheet.

#### Other Issues:

Deadlines. Meeting deadlines is essential for media professionals. Please make every effort to submit work on or before the deadline. If something outside of your control prevents on-time submission, email me right away to see if we can make suitable arrangements. The work week will begin on Mondays and end on Sundays at 11:59 p.m. CST. All deadlines are Sundays NLT 11:59 p.m. the week that they are due unless otherwise indicated. One exception is in our final week of the semester. All work will conclude NLT 11:59 p.m. on the last day of classes, which is Wed. April 29. There is no final exam in this course. In the event you anticipate a conflict, email me ([tmcliff@memphis.edu](mailto:tmcliff@memphis.edu)) to discuss it. While this class does require event attendance and event planning, students are empowered to decide whether they will attend and/or plan virtual or in-person events. Your health and safety should never be compromised to complete an assignment.

ChatGBT. You are permitted to use ChatGPT and other AI tools to assist you in gathering information, writing drafts, and revising your writing in this course. However, you are expected to

include a disclosure statement at the end of your assignment describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "*ChatGPT was used to draft about 30% of this assignment and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style.*" Be prepared to submit any prompts you used for assistance with your assignment as well as the original ChatGPT output and to be able to explain/show how you fact-checked and improved upon the AI's work.

If you become ill, or have other complications that affect your ability to submit your work on time, please communicate with me right away to see if we can make suitable accommodations, like extending deadlines a bit, considering a withdrawal or drop from the class, or issuing an incomplete for your class grade as opposed to an F.

Communication. Students should reach out to the professor via email ([tmcliff@memphis.edu](mailto:tmcliff@memphis.edu)) if they are experiencing trouble or have questions. Do not wait and let things snowball. I will make every effort to respond with 48-hours during the work week. If a message is sent over the weekend, additional response time may be required.

If you would like to book a meeting, please schedule it using the link at the top of the syllabus. While it says it will be a telephone meeting, it will take place on Teams. If you don't find availability during my regular office hours, email me and we will find a solution.

Discussion Board. Aside from your introduction discussion post, posts will not be required. However, there will be a specific discussion board for student use that is called The Coffee Shop. Feel free to communicate with classmates. This is not a requirement and will not be monitored by the professor, but it may be a helpful resource.

Quizzes. Quizzes will typically be given each time 3-4 chapters of material has been covered. The quizzes are multiple choice, true/false, and choose all that apply. Students are to take the quizzes on their own but are permitted to glance back at notes or the textbook for quick reminders. Everyone draws a blank sometimes. The quizzes are timed, so it is important to study the materials thoroughly and go into the quiz prepared or you will run out of time. The quizzes are set up to cut off at the allotted time and not allow for any additional questions to earn points. The system will grade what you completed in the time frame provided. Students will have two attempts at quizzes and the highest grade will be recorded in the gradebook.

### Grading

Assignments/Exercises/Activities/Discussion = 70%

Quizzes/Exams/Knowledge Checks = 30%

A= 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

### COURSE SCHEDULE

*Week 1, Jan. 20-25, Welcome!*

Review the syllabus and course format, get the textbook

Readings: Ch. 1

Assignments: Complete any other materials in week 1 content in Canvas

*Week 2, Jan. 26-Feb. 1, Chapter 1*

This chapter covers communication.

Readings: Ch. 2

Assignments: Complete any materials outlined in week 2 content in Canvas

*Week 3, Feb. 2-8, Chapter 2*

This chapter is about listening.

Readings: Ch. 3

Assignments: Complete any materials outlined in week 3 content in Canvas

*Week 4, Feb. 9-15, Chapter 3*

This week is about non-verbal communication.

Readings: Ch. 4

Assignments: Attend Event 1 and complete Event 1 assignment recording what you learned (Submit in Canvas NLT 11:59 p.m. this Sunday) and complete any other materials outlined in week 4 content in Canvas

*Week 5, Feb. 16-22, Chapter 4 and Quiz 1 (ch. 1-4)*

This week is about interpersonal relationships.

Readings: Ch. 5

Assignments: Quiz 1 and complete any other materials outlined in week 5 content in Canvas

*Week 6, Feb. 23-March 1, Chapter 5*

This week is about necessary event planning skills.

Readings: Ch. 6

Assignments: Attend Event 2 and complete Event 2 assignment recording what you learned (Submit in Canvas NLT 11:59 p.m. this Sunday) and complete any other materials outlined in week 6 content in Canvas

*Week 7, March 2-8, Chapter 6*

This week is about creativity.

Readings: Ch. 7

Assignments: Complete any materials outlined in week 7 content in Canvas

*Week 8, March 9-15, Chapter 7 (Spring Break)*

This week is all yours. Enjoy it!

Readings:

Assignments:

*Week 9, March 16-22, Chapter 7 and Quiz 2 (ch. 5-7)*

This week is about management of human resources.

Readings: Ch. 8

Assignments: Attend Event 3 and complete Event 3 assignment recording what you learned (Submit in Canvas NLT 11:59 p.m. this Sunday) and study for next week's Quiz 2. Complete any other materials outlined in week 9 content in Canvas

*Week 10, March 23-29, Chapter 8*

This week is about budgeting and finance.

Readings: Ch. 9

Assignments: Complete any other materials outlined in week 10 content in Canvas

*Week 11, March 30-April 5, Chapter 9*

This week is about ethics, negotiation and contracts.

Readings: Ch. 10

Assignments: Attend Event 4 and complete Event 4 assignment recording what you learned (Submit in Canvas NLT 11:59 p.m. this Sunday) and complete any other materials outlined in week 11 content in Canvas

*Week 12, April 6-12, Chapter 10, Quiz 3 (ch. 8-10)*

This week is about staging.

Readings: Ch. 11

Assignments: Quiz 3 and complete any other materials outlined in week 12 content in Canvas

*Week 13, April 13-19, Chapter 11*

This week is about the process from scripting to reflecting.

Readings: Ch. 12

Assignments: Complete any other materials outlined in week 13 content in Canvas

*Week 14, April 20-26, Chapter 12*

This week is about conflict and crisis.

Readings: Ch. 13

Assignments: Attend Event 5 and complete Event 5 assignment recording what you learned (Submit in Canvas NLT 11:59 p.m. this Sunday) and complete any other materials outlined in week 14 content in Canvas

*Week 15, April 27-29, Chapter 13 and Quiz 4 (ch. 11-13) Graduate Student Event Planning Assignment Due (PBRL 6301)*

This week is about integrated marketing.

Readings: Review for last quiz

Assignments: Complete Quiz 4 (ch. 11, 12, 13) NLT 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, April 29. Graduate students must submit Graduate Student Event Planning Assignment on the last day of class, Wednesday, April 29 NLT 11:59 p.m.

## ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

### Five Pillars in STRM 4230

- *Critical Thinking:* Students attend and evaluate events during the semester. Students must decide the best course for their event project and be able to defend their decisions.
- *Media Literacy:* Students discuss each step in the event management process and its impact. Students must evaluate various forms of media to determine effectiveness for event marketing.
- *Multimedia:* Students are exposed to project management applications such as Microsoft Project and Slack.
- *Professionalism:* Students learn the professional routines of event planners as well as professional means to communicate during the event planning process.
- *Writing:* Students develop appropriate audience-specific messages to inform publics about events, write event proposals, evaluations, and presentations or reports.

### Professional values and competencies for STRM 4230

- 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 current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

### How professional values and competencies will be met

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

- Provide a conceptual overview and a systematic study of event planning, management, marketing, logistics, risk assessment and practical applications.
- Understand the importance of considering diversity, accessibility, and inclusiveness when planning events.
- Interpret and apply principles of leadership and event management to the special needs of event organizations.
- Foster professionalism in event management, covering the knowledge base, theory,

methodologies and ethics.

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

1. Select and apply appropriate research and project management tools in support of event planning.
2. Evaluate and critique events.
3. Plan and execute a special event (if for honors credit or graduate students).
4. Identify appropriate marketing strategies for different events.
5. Work effectively in a group.
6. Communicate the evaluation of special event in a final report/presentation.

How assessment of student learning will be met

*Awareness*

- Learn about the important role of event planning in public relations

*Understanding*

- Understand leadership management and the role event planning plays in public relations practice
- Learn the basics of event finance and budget management
- Recognize some of the different types of events and the variety of needs that come with each type
- Appreciate that event attendees want to have 'an experience' at an event, and understand appropriate ways to provide this based on type of event; and
- Study effective promotion of events

*Application*

- Attend and evaluate campus and community events submitting an assessment assignment for each event
- Network with professionals in public relations and greater community
- Improve written and oral communication skills through written briefs, assessments, and presentations or reports
- Complete project researching, planning, promoting, executing, and evaluating a special event during the course of the semester
- Gain experience creating effective event/organization goals and timelines
- Learn about personal leadership style and determine areas of potential growth
- Enhance leadership and organizational skills within an event management role
- Develop a presentation or report about the special event project that describes the experiential learning that took place during the process

## 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 JRS 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRS 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 UIDs 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

Students 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.

### 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](mailto: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 Resources

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