

Introduction to Public Relations

JOUR3400-001

Fall 2015

Monday & Wednesday, 2:20-3:45 p.m.

MJ100

Robert L. Willis, M.A.

Office: MJ113

Office Hours: MTuWThF 10-11 a.m.

Phone: 678-5474

Email: rlwillis@memphis.edu

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOG/COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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

PREREQUISITE: None

TEXTBOOKS:

Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice by Lattimore, D., Baskin, O., Heiman, S.T., Toth, E.L. (New York: McGraw Hill), 2012 (fourth edition).

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

The class will be presented in the lecture and discussion formats. Class discussion will involve application of the concepts within the public relations 4-step process to the group project.

GRADING:

The student's final grade will be based on a percentage of the following:

Three exams @ 200 points each	600 points
Group project applying the public relations 4-step process	400 points
Total possible	1,000 points

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic/Assignment</i>	<i>Readings</i>
Week 1	Course Overview, What is PR?	Chapter 1 & Lecture
Week 2	History of PR	Chapter 2 & Lecture
Week 3	Public Opinion, Publics & PR Theory	Chapter 3 & Lecture
Week 4	Types of PR practiced, the role of PR in organizational decision making	Chapter 3 & Lecture
Week 5	Ethics & Professionalism	Chapter 4 & Lecture
Week 6	EXAM 1 , Public Relations Research	Chapter 5 & Lecture
Week 7	Planning, writing objectives	Chapter 6 & Lecture
Week 8	Action & Communication	Chapter 7 & Lecture
Week 9	Media, News Values & Publicity	Chapter 7 & Lecture
Week 10	EXAM 2 , Evaluation	Chapter 8 & Lecture
Week 11	Not-for-Profit/Corporate PR	Ch. 15 & 16 & Lecture
Week 12	Media Relations, PR from a media prospective	Chapter 9 & Lecture
Week 13	Legal Considerations	Chapter 4 & Lecture
Week 14	Crisis Communications, Comparing PR,	Chapter 9 & 12 & Lecture

FIVE PILLARS FOR JOUR3400

- *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, students conduct a personal digital media inventory and present the results to the class.
- *Writing*: JOUR 3400 addresses writing skills related to strategic planning, crisis communication, positioning, and platform specific media requirements.
- *Multimedia*: Students prepare a personal digital media inventory and present it to the class. Students also create a short videography and post it on YouTube.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students must demonstrate an understanding of the importance of understanding the needs, values, and attitudes of all stakeholder groups in order to determine the appropriate public relations strategies to implement.
- *Media Literacy*: JOUR 3400 addresses media literacy by exposing students to the vocabulary and tools of the public relations industry. Students learn how to communicate with different media outlets, and how to conduct research, planning, communication and evaluation.

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR3400:

- 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 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;
- 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 tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

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

- Define public relations.
- Distinguish public relations from other management functions.
- Explain how public relations evolved in the United States.
- Describe the activities of public relations – what PR people do.
- Identify an organization's key publics – including under represented publics.

- Describe and apply the public relations process – research, planning, action/communication and evaluation.
- Describe the various contexts for public relations.

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

- Earn a passing score on periodic exams.
- Work a public relations problem within an ethical framework.
- Write measurable objectives necessary to successful application of the public relations 4-step process.

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR JOUR3400:

The course is designed to equip students with knowledge necessary to successfully apply problem-solving concepts constituting the public relations 4-step process.

Awareness:

- Identify historically significant principles and applications in the evolution of public relations through quizzes and exams.

Understanding:

- Target identified publics for appropriate communication in applying the public relations 4-step process.

Application:

- Successfully execute a group project that applies the public relations 4-step process.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be to

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- *Awareness*: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- *Understanding*: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- *Application*: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:

All Department of Journalism undergraduate students are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Students are to begin the portfolio in JOUR 2121 and contribute to it during every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their concentrations.

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 <http://iam.memphis.edu> 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 to be used during class or to complete class assignments. Others do not allow them. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. Students are permitted three total unexcused absences without penalty. After three absences, the student's final grade will be deducted one letter grade for each absence. After seven unexcused absences, the student will fail the course. Absences for illness and other catastrophic emergencies, such as a death in the family, must be documented (e.g. doctor's note or obituary) to be excused from the total absence count. Students with excessive unexcused absences are encouraged to withdraw from the course prior to the drop deadline.

DEADLINES:

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and mass communications. Assignments turned in late will NOT be graded. Late work is not accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Students are NOT permitted to make up assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. that occurred during an unexcused absence. Students who will miss class and/or a deadline because of an excused absence are expected to notify the instructor immediately upon knowing the absence

will occur; exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances. Students who are absent during the final exam are not permitted to make up the exam and will earn a grade of 0, which might result in failure of the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, and violations of copyright law as acts of academic dishonesty punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Penalties might include grade reductions or dismissal of the student from the university.

“Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

Intellectual property and copyright guidelines

1. Ideas cannot be copyrighted, but the way they are described can.
2. Anything set down in a tangible form, i.e., written, is by law copyrighted.
3. If, in a paraphrase, your work is “substantially similar” to a copyrighted work, you are guilty of copyright infringement.
4. A citation indicates where you got material. However, that portion you do not show as a direct quote must be “substantially original” to you. In other words, you can’t just paste in something from another’s work, put a citation at the bottom and call it your own. You need a full rewrite in your own words and syntax so the unquoted material is “substantially original” to you.

Plagiarism: From UM Student Handbook: The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower 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:

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.

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.