

Public Relations Case Studies

JOUR 4420-M50

Spring 2012

Online Course

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOGUE/COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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

PREREQUISITE:

JOUR 3400 – Introduction to Public Relations

TEXTBOOK:

Public Relations Practices: Managerial Case Studies and Problems by Center, A., Jackson, P., Smith, S., and Stansberry, F. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008). ISBN-13: 978-0-13-234136-3 or ISBN-10: 0-13-234136-0

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format. You must have Internet access and Microsoft Word or other word processing software that generates a “.doc” extension.

You must have Microsoft Word software. I must be able to open your work to grade it. Work submitted in a software package not noted as acceptable in this syllabus (Microsoft Word) may result in point deductions being assessed to your work.

COURSE WEB SITE ADDRESS: (The course page will be open from January 12 to May 3, 2012.)

1. Go to the University of Memphis home page: <http://www.memphis.edu>
2. Click on the “MyMemphis” link at the bottom of the left column menu.
3. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
4. Click on the “eCampus Resources” tab.
5. In the center column of the page, click on the blue UoM eCourseware link.
6. Down on that page, in the Spring 2012 course list available to you click on the link for JOUR 4420 - M50 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page.

GRADING:

Testing Procedures: Course work will be accomplished each week. Five exams will be part of your final grade; each one will cover material in your textbook. Each must be completed by its due date and time (Central Standard Time), which varies by exam. Check each due time to ensure that you post by the deadline. Exams will consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions,

which will contain one or more units of study. Exams will have a time limit. Desire2Learn will cut you off at the end of the prescribed time period, regardless of whether you have completed all questions. You may use your textbook to confirm an answer, but be aware that time limits will not allow you to spend much time flipping through it. You should read and be familiar with each section before taking its exam.

Other parts of your grade will come from participation in weekly online discussions and submission of individual assignments and a group project. (The group project includes a peer evaluation component.) This work must be submitted per instructions; no credit will be given outside of the proper submission guidelines.

Grading Procedure:

*****ONLINE SUCCESS:** Your success in this online course will depend on your willingness to read the textual material, successfully complete exams, and complete written work and a group project as scheduled.

All work submitted will be considered final, as each student has unlimited access to the course to ask questions. There will be no re-submission of papers to increase the initial grade given. You are required to ask via e-mail, set up an appointment in the chat room, or call me with your questions as to the proper completion of coursework. It is your responsibility to ensure clarification of instructions.

All work submitted must reflect critical thinking and knowledge of the material; that is, examples found within or outside of class, along with elaboration, are required to achieve an “A” grade. Material on all exams and most of our assignments come from our textbooks; check these resources first for your material.

No work will be accepted after the final day of class.

Grading Scale:

Five Exams Covering Textbooks — 250 points
Individual Participation in Class Discussions — 250 points
Five Written Assignments — 200 points
Group Project — 500 points
TOTAL: 1,200 points

A = 1,080-1,200 points
B = 960-1,079 points
C = 840-959 points
D = 720-839 points
F = 719 and fewer points

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:

Individual Participation in Class Discussions
Participation #1 (25 points): January 30 – February 5
Participation #2 (25 points): February 6-12
Participation #3 (25 points): February 13-19
Participation #4 (25 points): February 20-26

Participation #5 (25 points): February 27 – March 4
Participation #6 (25 points): March 12-18
Participation #7 (25 points): March 19-25
Participation #8 (25 points): March 26 – April 1
Participation #9 (25 points): April 2-8
Participation #10 (25 points): April 9-15
PARTICIPATION TOTAL: 250 points

Exams

Exam #1 (50 points): available through February 5
Exam #2 (50 points): available February 6-19
Exam #3 (50 points): available Feb. 20 – March 4
Exam #4 (50 points): available March 12 – April 1
Exam #5 (50 points): available April 2-22
EXAMS TOTAL: 250 points

Written Assignments

Written Assignment #1 (40 points): available January 30 – February 12
Written Assignment #2 (40 points): available Feb. 13-26
Written Assignment #3 (40 points): available Feb. 27 – March 18
Written Assignment #4 (40 points): available March 19 – April 1
Written Assignment #5 (40 points): available April 2-15
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS TOTAL: 200 points

Group Project (500 points): due by April 25

TOTAL POSSIBLE SEMESTER POINTS: 1,200 points

ASSIGNED READINGS

Here are the assigned readings from your textbook:

Chapter 1: The Purposes of Public Relations, January 16-22
Chapter 1: The Purposes of Public Relations, January 23-29
Chapter 2: How Public Relations Deals with Problems & Opportunities, January 30 – February 5
Chapter 3: Employee Relations, February 6-12
Chapter 4: Moderating Focus Groups, February 13-19
Chapter 5: Investor Relations, February 20-26
Chapter 6: Consumer Relations, February 27 – March 4
Chapter 7: Media Relations, March 12-18
Chapter 7: Media Relations, March 19-25
Chapter 8: Public Issue Campaigns and Debates, March 26 – April 1
Chapter 9: Crisis Management, April 2-8
Chapter 10: Standards, Ethics, and Values, April 9-15
Chapter 10: Standards, Ethics, and Values, April 16-22

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR 4420:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power and to assemble and petition for redress and grievances.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- 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 structure.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET FOR JOUR 4420:**Cognitive Objectives To Be Mastered (Ability to Explain, Analyze, Understand, Think Critically):**

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

Performance Standards To Be Met (Demonstrable Skills, Abilities, Techniques, Applied Competencies):

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

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR JOUR 4420:

The course is designed to equip students with knowledge necessary to analyze public relations problems, postulate alternative solutions, evaluate alternatives and develop appropriate public relations strategies and tactics.

Awareness:

- + Identify and solve public relations problems through online discussions, individual written assignments, exams and a group project.

Application:

- + Define publics, examine motivators, establish message content, select media and conform to budgetary limitations. Students will pay special attention to diversity among organizational constituencies and the implications of diversity in the development of public relations plans.
- + Students will review and analyze case problems covering textbook and contemporary scenarios and submit individual written assessments. Each assessment will be graded.
- + Students will successfully execute a group project. Final project will be graded (including a peer grade.)
- + Students will successfully complete periodic exams covering textbook materials and contemporary case problems.

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 able 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 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;
- 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

E-MAIL:

You must have your UM e-mail account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> Web site to implement forwarding of UM e-mail. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any e-mail sent to you by your professor or the University.

CELL PHONES:

You must turn them off during 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. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence due to illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g., with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another course. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

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

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

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of the course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that course. 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.

EXIT EXAM FOR ALL JOURNALISM MAJORS:

All Journalism majors are required to take the Journalism Exit Exam their last semester before graduation. Please contact the Journalism office staff anytime during the semester to sign up. You may take the test anytime there are open lab hours during the semester. You will not be certified to graduate until you have completed the test.