

**SYLLABUS**  
**ADPR 5920: PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMUNICATION**  
**Department of Advertising/Public Relations**  
**Henry W. Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication**  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

*"Public relations is the business of relationship management."*

-- John Pavlik, Rutgers U.

*"All business in a democratic society begins with public permission and exists by public approval...The purpose of public relations is to deserve and maintain public approval."*

-- Arthur Page, AT&T

Term: Fall 2009, 3 credits    Call #: 44-784    Prerequisites: JOUR 3410, ADPR 3850

Room and Time: J-Bldg 132, T & Th 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> periods, 2:-4:45 p.m. [2-4 p.m. most days]

Professor: Dr. Lynne Sallot, APR, Fellow PRSA

Office: JRL 223-E

E-mail: sallot@uga.edu

Office Hours: 1-1:45 p.m. Tuesdays, after class and by appointment.

Phone: office 542-4999 24/7, home (706) 208-0941 for emergencies only. Fax: (706) 542-2183

***Course objectives:*** This is a service-learning course designed for students to learn professional writing skills required in the practice of public relations within the context of planned campaigns. The course will emphasize *effective* writing as it is applied in programmed communications for organizations in the private and public sectors as part of an overall public relations plan involving objectives, research, sound implementation and evaluation strategies. It will familiarize students with communication theories and practices governing techniques for a variety of applications, including writing for print and electronic media and direct (unmediated) communications, such as social media, the Web, speeches, direct mail, and special events. Students will learn to target communications for diverse audiences, and to foster cooperative relationships with media professionals. Students will master grammar, punctuation, AP style, and other mechanics of writing. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the ethical and legal considerations of public relations. They will learn to plan for and respond to crisis situations.

***Required:*** A supplementary course packet is available for purchase from Pro Copies at Baxter Street Bookstore at 360 Baxter (706.546.1440). This will serve as your course manual/ textbook. It is 250+ pages; I recommend you put it in a three-ring binder. Other materials may be placed on reserve in the Journalism Library/Drewry Room, and/or will be distributed in class.

***Suggested texts:*** *AP Stylebook*, a dictionary and a thesaurus. As needed: Strunk, White & Angell's *Elements of Style*; Zinsser's *On Writing Well*; LaRocque's *The Book on Writing: The Ultimate Guide on Writing Well*; Fiske's *The Dictionary of Concise Writing: 10,000 Alternatives to Wordy Phrases*.

***Course assignments overview:*** Your grade in this course depends on weekly writing assignments, in-lab and/or out-of-class. To pass this course, you must satisfactorily complete a course project, which is the service-learning component. Failure to complete the final project satisfactorily will result in failure of the course. There is no final exam. There will be an interview assignment, and there may be unscheduled quizzes covering course material (if needed/when appropriate). Extra-credit opportunities in the form of bonus points may be developed.

**Final course project:** You will select a non-profit or UGA student organization, to be approved by the instructor and to serve as your final project “client.” PRSSA or Creative Consultants, political, religious and any controversial (e.g. Pro-Life, Pro-Choice) organizations, are NOT eligible. The emphasis in this course is **writing**; you are not required to implement your project.

You will produce: A project action plan/proposal including a detailed description of your client/your project in a detailed situation analysis; identification of specific problem(s)/ opportunity(ies) you are solving/addressing and intended publics; appropriate goals and objectives and an outline of research steps that *would be* necessary to finalize the detailed public relations program to achieve your goals/objectives if you were implementing your project; strategies and tactics you would recommend to satisfy your program goals/objectives appropriate to the situation; and plans for how you would evaluate your campaign (if actually implemented).

In support of your goals, objectives, strategies and tactics, you will prepare each of the following support communications, in styles and formats most effective for your particular client:

- Sample research questionnaire and/or focus group moderator’s guide
- News announcement (indicating media to be serviced)
- Fact sheet/backgrounder on your client
- Feature "pitch" communication/letter to an appropriate editor of a target print or broadcast medium (which you will identify)
- Feature release (can be based on feature pitch/newsletter lead story)
- Social media tools
- Scripts for :30-second radio and television PSAs
- 5-minute (750-word) speech appropriate for a client spokesperson to deliver with description of the intended occasion(s) and target audience(s)
- Description of a newsletter including target audiences, outline of contents, a rough layout, and the copy for the entire lead article; *or* description of a brochure for your client including target audiences, a rough layout, and all copy. A memo is recommended for the description elements.
- A separate special event design in action plan memo/outline format that directly supports your program objectives
- Recommendations in action plan memo/outline format for Web site design and content
- Checklist/table of contents of final project, all presented in a “themed” folder (as you would a press kit)

Before you produce your final project, you will have completed practice assignments with various “class clients” for most, if not all, of these project components. Reminder: As you review this syllabus, you are looking at 15 weeks’ worth of work. Don’t panic. This *is* do-able -- or I would not design and implement the course this way!

**Course project assignment timetable: Some key dates**

Memo describing final project client due 9/15

Draft final project client plan and client fact sheet due 10/15

Practitioner interviewee name/interview date due 10/15

Practitioner interview assignment due 11/19

Final project must be turned in by 9 a.m., Monday, 12/7

**COURSE PROJECT BONUS:** Evidence, such as press clippings and/or written documentation from the client, of client's use of materials prepared for the course project **TURNED IN WITH THE FINAL PROJECT** will automatically earn five bonus project points (a half-grade boost).

**Interview assignment** will involve your interview of a public relations professional about the inter-relationships between journalists and public relations practitioners and use of social media. Based on your interview, you will produce a 3-5 page feature article. A handout will further detail the assignment, due 11/19. You will present your interview findings in class on 12/1.

**Weekly writing assignments** will be assigned in-lab and/or out-of-class (most weeks there will be two assignments). They will involve practical applications for a "class client" of techniques under study and assigned for the final project. ALL assignment must be typed.

**UGA Honor Code/Academic Honesty Policy** All academic work must meet the standards contained in UGA's "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work (the complete policy is available at [www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm)). You should be committed to academic honesty and excellence. The quality of students and their work reflects the quality of our College and University. Cheating and dishonesty in any form compromises your grade, lowers the quality of your degree, and will not be tolerated. Honor Code standards will be in force during this course. Any questionable behavior will result in a lower grade or failure of the entire course. I hope each of you values your college education enough to protect yourself from dishonest classmates. If you are aware of improper behavior, please contact the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities** UGA has a Disability Resource Center. UGA is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws including the American Disabilities Act. At the beginning of the term, students immediately should call to their instructor's attention any disabilities that require special consideration.

**Evaluation:** Your grades will reflect your ability to produce written materials according to the professional standards covered in class. Accuracy, spelling, grammar, style, clean copy (proofread and corrected), and adherence to deadlines will have direct effects. All out-of-class assignments are due at or before the time designated. All lab assignments are due at the end of lab period. Again, all work must be typewritten. Of course, in the "real world," none of your work is "graded." In this class, you will be provided examples of similar communications before assignments are due. After you complete assignments, you will be given a "model/prototype/template" of that particular assignment to aid your self-assessments. You are to maintain a portfolio of all completed weekly assignments with your self-assessments. I will keep a record of whether you complete all assignments on-time. In addition to assessing content, organization and overall effectiveness of your writing, I will also assess its professionalism and attention to detail. I will randomly grade some weekly assignments of my choice (unannounced), and you will submit your portfolio to me periodically for my review. I may also assign some "blind" peer reviewing to give you experience in assessing/editing others' work.

Your final grade for the course will conform with UGA's +/- system.

Numerical grades will translate to letter grades as follows: 94-100=A, 90-93=A-, 87-89=B+, 84-86=B, 80-83=B-, 77-79=C+, 74-76=C, , 70-73=C-, 65-69=D, 64 and below=F.

Your final grade will consist of:

Final course project	- 45% (MANDATORY to pass course)
Weekly assignments/portfolio	- 35%
Interview assignment & presentation	- 15%
Class participation	- 5% (Instructor's discretion)

TOTAL 

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 100% + BONUS points

**Course materials:** You are responsible for safe-guarding all assignments throughout the course. Please back up your work on flash drives. You'll also need a three-ring binder for your course packet, lecture notes and handouts. You will be expected to bring specified pages from the course packet to lecture/lab. Again, style and neatness count, particularly for your final course project.

**Class Rules** You **MUST** follow the rules for the use of any Grady College or UGA facilities, such as no food/no drink policies in the labs. Guests may be exempted from this rule.

**Course participation:** Clients expect you to be prepared and engaged when you meet with them, and our class meetings are no different. I expect timely completion of assignments and your full attention in class. Because ADPR 5920 is a professional course, punctual attendance is mandatory. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points for non-attendance. Sign-in sheets will record your attendance. Students are expected to arrive and be seated on time and otherwise behave in the manner expected of professionals. **VERY IMPORTANT:** LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. ASSIGNMENTS MISSED WILL RESULT IN A ZERO GRADE FOR THE ASSIGNMENT UNLESS YOU HAVE MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR. Just as if you were "on-the-job," the "prior arrangements" policy applies to all situations, including death in immediate family or illness documented by doctor's note. Instructor's office phone is (706) 542-4999 anytime, home (706) 208-0941 in emergencies. Any unnecessary distractions, such as chronic tardiness and talking in class, will not be tolerated. No food or drinks are permitted in the classroom/lab. Dispose of properly or take with you any trash that you generate. Turn off cell phones/pagers in class. If they ring, they belong to me!

**E-mail:** As this is a writing course, the ability to communicate in a professional and courteous manner via e-mail is extremely important. Students are expected to display their top-level Grady PR communication skills each time they send an e-mail to the professor. If a student fails to use AP Style, a professional greeting or sign with one's full name in an e-mail, then the student will lose 1 point off of the final (overall grade) for the course for each e-mail sent with an infraction. We will discuss examples of proper and improper e-mail communication so as to avoid e-mail mistakes.

**Class gmail account:** I will establish a gmail account for our class to facilitate communications among us.

**Course Evaluations** At the end of the semester, you will have the opportunity to respond to a College course evaluation online at [eval.franklin.uga.edu](http://eval.franklin.uga.edu). Your anonymity is assured. The results will NOT be communicated to me until grades are posted. Your opinions, thoughts, and suggestions are very important to me and to the department to improve course design and delivery. Informal, anonymous evaluations may be conducted periodically.

I encourage you to come visit me during office hours or by appointment anytime you wish to discuss the class in general or any concerns about your work.

A proposed course schedule follows. This course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and I will announce them as soon as I know they will occur.

I look forward to working with you individually and collectively and to having a *great* semester!

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE (Dates Subject to Change)

Week 1:

- 8/18 Review syllabus, student data sheets  
8/20 Introduction: PR writing fundamentals/principles  
Assignments: Print news announcement; editing exercise  
Begin researching client for course project

Week 2:

- 8/25 PR planning – Assignment: Class PR planning exercise (due 9/15)  
  
8/27 Writing for PR research: FG moderator/interview guides and survey questionnaires  
Lab: Moderator’s guide/Draft questionnaire

Week 3:

- 9/1 Writing research reports  
9/3 Planning exercise (due 9/15) workday  
Optional: PRSA | GA Chapter Pre-Lunch Seminar: Creating your Social Media Playbook: A Pre-Season Training Camp by **Dr. Kaye Sweetser**, 9-11:15 a.m., and Lunch: “Brown Bailout” Barrage — A Case Study on Using Social Media to Protect Your Brand featuring **Lynnette McIntire and Debbie Curtis-Magley**, managers, UPS Public Relations, 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m.,  
Maggiano's (Buckhead)

Week 4:

- 9/8 Writing for news media  
Press kits and fact sheets  
Assignment: Draft client Fact Sheets (due 10/15 with draft client plan)  
  
9/10 News announcements, media advisories for print media  
Assignment: News announcements

Week 5:

- 9/15 News announcements (cont'd.) / **Class will start at 2:30 p.m. today**  
Class PR planning exercise & course final project/client description memo due  
9/17 Lab: News announcements / Assignment: News announcements

Week 6:

- 9/22 Review class planning exercise  
Generating in-depth coverage: Feature pitches, feature articles  
9/24 Feature pitches, feature articles > Lab

Week 7:

- 9/29 Review completed assignments > 2<sup>nd</sup> feature pitch assignment  
  
10/1 Social media pitches

Week 8:

- 10/6 Draft final project plans and fact sheets workday  
10/8 Term mid-point  
10/8 Print vs. broadcast media, VNRs, PSAs > Assignment: PSAs

Week 9:

- 10/13 Special events – Assignment: Special event planning memo  
10/15 Draft final client project plan/client fact sheet due–No exceptions!!!  
Practitioner appointment MUST be set/memos due

Week 10:

- 10/20 & 10/22 One-on-one reviews of draft client plans/fact sheets (individual meetings with instructor at assigned times; no class meetings)

Week 11:

- 10/27 Direct communications > Assignment: Client speeches; **class will start at 2:30 p.m. today**  
10/29 Final projects workday  
**10/30 Fall break**

Week 12:

- 11/3 Direct communications > Lab: Newsletter/brochure editing/critiques  
11/5 Direct communications > Web sites

Week 13:

- 11/10 Direct communications > Blogging  
**11/11 PRSSA's Professional CONNECTION**  
11/12 Direct communications > Twitter/More Social Media

Week 14:

- 11/17 Evaluation / Crisis Response Strategies  
11/19 Wrap-up final projects questions / Practitioner Interview assignment due

**11/23 – 11/27 Happy Thanksgiving!!!!**

Week 15:

- 12/1 Presentations of Practitioner Interviews  
12/3 Final projects workday  
  
12/7 **COURSE PROJECTS MUST BE TURNED IN BY 9 a.m.**  
Bring to Sallot's office, 223-E, or turn in to Ad/PR office

Notice: Lectures in this class are the property of the instructor, may not be taped without prior permission from the instructor, and may not be used for any commercial purpose.