

# ADPR 5950/7950

## Public Relations Campaigns      Fall 2009

---

**Instructor:**

Dr. Ruthann Weaver Lariscy  
223-B Grady  
706 542-5008 (O)  
706 542-1913 (H)  
rlariscy@uga.edu  
706 540-9045 (text only for emergency only please)

**Office hours:**

Tuesday 11:00-12:00  
Thursday 1:00-2:00  
and by appointment

**Dates of course:**      Tuesday, August 18 through Thursday, December 3

**Days, time, place:**      Tuesday & Thursday, MLC 253, 2:00-3:15 and Grady 239-B

**Final exam period:**      Friday, December 11, 12:00-3:00 (if needed)

**Instructor Bio:**

Dr. Lariscy is a Professor and has been teaching and conducting communications research at the University since 1981, with one break from 1987-1990. She holds an Honors bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri—Columbia in a history/political science double major; a master's degree from [now] Missouri State University in speech communication, and an interdisciplinary Ph.D. from the University of Missouri—Columbia in journalism, political science, and communication. She received an outstanding alumnus of Mizzou award last year for her research contributions. She maintains active research in health communication, political campaign communication, public relations roles with journalists, and most recently how social media are transforming the work world.

Dr. Lariscy also maintains an active presence in public relations research consulting. As a private consultant she and her partners regularly provide comprehensive research plans for both public entities, like county governments, state agencies, and school districts, as well as private corporate entities, like restaurant chains, heating & cooling manufacturers, and agricultural equipment manufacturers. She is committed to the principle that excellent teaching is informed by research and professional practice.

**Course Objectives:**

This is a service-learning class where you have the opportunity to become a true public relations practitioner. This class is the culmination of everything you have learned to this time about the application of ethical and legal practices of public relations to help a real client organization with a real situation. Your solid understanding of the principles of public relations, scientific research to guide decisions, strategic thinking, objectives-based planning, multiple communication techniques (including the most current online media options) appropriate for diverse publics, and ongoing evaluation of your decisions are required.

From your first Public Relations Principles class through your writing and graphics skills classes, to your research methods and management classes you have been preparing for this: your capstone course. This class will provide you with a campaign book that, very often, clinches the first job when the potential employer realizes what you bring to the table.

At the end of this class you will have:

- \*worked with a team of colleagues (as in real life) and successfully negotiated group processes, managed conflict, divided responsibilities, assumed various roles; you will have set many of your own deadlines

- \*worked with a real client who possesses real public relations needs. Clients do not know what you know about public relations—you will treat them with constant respect as you learn the intricacies of interacting with people who you depend on, but who are equally depending on you

- \*conceived, with client input and basic background research, an accurate picture of the situations the client and organization are in. You will know everything possible about your organization: its history, its employee situation, its services, its current advertising/marketing/public relations efforts, the larger industry/environment in which it operates. If there is a specific situation/event you will know everything relevant leading up to it, what has been done thus far to address it, and make recommendations going forward.

- \*conducted primary research –qualitative, quantitative, secondary-- as needed for the client. Clients often do not know what they need---you will figure out what they need (if they don't know) and inform them why it is important and what it will yield

- \*written a campaign plan including: situation analysis, research report, problem/opportunity statement, goals, objectives, itemized tasks, targeted publics, strategy options recommended, budget, timeline, suggested resources, strategy for evaluation

- \* created templates/masters for numerous produced communication materials

- \*created and distributed some communication materials on behalf of the client

- \*prepared and delivered a professional presentation with multiple visuals for the client.

- \*evaluated your own and your colleagues contributions to achievement of the goals. Provided feedback and evaluation for client and instructor.

### **Course description:**

In this class you work in teams of 10+/- colleagues for a real client. Your work will include the development of everything mentioned in objectives---a complete public relations plan based on sound research findings in order to achieve one or more of your client's goals. The plan will include support materials (the “produced communication materials” referenced above) for the proposed campaign (news releases, speech transcripts, logos, Web sites, brochures, etc) that are included in the book and presented to the client at your final presentation and the end of the semester. **You will provide the client with everything in the plan in a “ready to go/launch” form.**

For example, if one tactic you have selected to help meet one objective is a “Breakfast With State Legislators” you will include: justification of why this event/tactic for this objective? Why is it the most effective way to accomplish X? How can you get the legislators to attend—what are the best times, location? Is there a particular incentive that works well? What does it entail—from scheduling, invitations, menu, materials to distribute, etc. Include everything. Who from your organization will speak? What will s/he say?

One member of each client team will be selected as the team account executive. This person is not the “boss” of the team. All decisions must reflect input/discussion from all team members.

### **Honors students/Graduate students**

If there are honors and/or graduate students enrolled they will be assigned some/all the following: being account executives, taking the lead role in research efforts including writing the research report, assisting/supervising strategy implementation, other leadership rolls as needed. Additionally, graduate students may be asked to assist with multiple meetings (given my voice situation) or at times meet with various teams. Please email me immediately after class today if you are either an Honors or Graduate student.

### **Course materials:**

There is no required text. I will provide you with reading materials online periodically either through my Delicious site: <http://delicious.com/RuthannLariscy5950> or as handouts. I also ask you to read several campaign plan books that are on file under my name and this course number in the Drewry reading room. Those books may not leave the reading room.

You will also need a Gmail account. Each student must either have a personal computer with excellent Internet access or have one available that you check multiple times daily.

Students will share in the cost of producing campaign materials for the client, instructor, and themselves. **Two identical books—one for the instructor and one for the client—are required.** Funds you would ordinarily spend on text books will be spent on these campaign plan books. You will also provide the instructor and the client with one CD with all materials included.

### **Evaluation**

There are no exams in this course. Your grade will reflect your ability to produce the campaign plan and support materials according to professional standards. Creativity, accuracy, spelling, grammar, style, presentation, punctuality, and commitment all directly effect your evaluation.

Written plan book

30%

Presentation	10%
Instructor's & Client's evaluations	30%
Peer evaluations	30%

### **Class Rules**

1. You are expected to attend every scheduled meeting—class, client, team, instructor and be punctual. If you cannot attend a meeting you **MUST** contact in interested parties **PRIOR** to the absence. More than one missed meeting will likely result in a lowered evaluation from peers, client, and/or instructor. Multiple missed meetings will result in failure in the class.
2. All work produced by you on behalf of the client **MUST** be approved by the client **BEFORE** it is released. You may seek my help but you are responsible for meeting the client's needs and obtaining his/her approval.
3. All work produced by your team represents each one of you. Read, edit, and proof all materials – your personal credibility and evaluation are at stake.
4. You must follow the rules for use of the Yarbrough Lab (Room 239B) especially regarding the no food/drink policy. Guests and donors are exempt from this rule.
5. You are responsible for safe-guarding all work throughout the semester. Save/back-up your work (USB flashdrive, etc) at all times. Keep all your work organized so you can easily access something during a meeting. Everything must be typewritten. Technical equipment failure is not an excuse – have a backup plan for everything.
6. Failure to produce a complete campaign plan, work satisfactorily with the client, your peers, and the instructor and to participate in the final presentation will result in failure in the course.
7. Cell phones and other personal electronic devices must be turned off during class, team and client meetings. Laptop computers may be used in class and team meetings *exclusively* for client relevant work.

### **Class Communication**

I have established a Google group for this class:

**address** Current web address:  
<http://groups.google.com/group/campaigns-5950>

Current email address:  
[campaigns-5950@googlegroups.com](mailto:campaigns-5950@googlegroups.com)

Particularly given my voice situation this will be an important tool for us. I recommend that each team create its own Google group as well—if you are not familiar with Google groups please become so. It is widely used in the profession largely due to its ease of sharing documents and having online discussions. Group membership should be “by invitation only.” You are not required to have me as a member of your team. However, I recommend that you save all materials and discussions in case there is a question about “what happened when” or something similar at a later time in the class.

You are all professional writers. The ability to communicate professionally via email is extremely important as you transition to the workforce. You are expected to display your top-level Grady PR communication skills each time an email is sent to client, instructor, etc. Failure to use correct AP style, a professional greeting or sign with one’s full name will result in a 1-point loss per occurrence. Note: your online, internal team discussions are exempt from this so long as they comply with the following.

Remember that the team account executive is only one voice in team deliberations. You are all to be **respectful** of each other online and face-to-face; **fair** in distribution of responsibilities; and **open** in communicating with each other, your client, and the instructor. As a PR CEO recently announced, “we must have a gossip-free work environment.” Great advice.

We are operating as a Public Relations Agency. I am the CEO. Each team is responsible for keeping me (or one of my surrogates) informed. You are urged to resolve any small interpersonal conflicts or irresponsible team members as a team first. This is how it is done in the workplace and how it will be done here. If, after genuine team attempts at resolution there is still a problem, let me know.

***Communicating with the Instructor.*** The account executive will serve as primary liason with both the client and with me. This individual will email me every week, by 5:00 pm the evening prior to your team’s scheduled meeting. Include (1) a printed agenda of what we need to go over that week and any specific questions you have (that way I can write responses beforehand if needed); and 2) the team’s compiled time sheet for the preceding week If someone other than me will be meeting with a team on a particular day, I will notify you via our Google groups account.

### Time Sheets

Individually keep track in 15-minute increments of time spent working on this class, excluding class meeting times. As a team select one member to collect and consolidate these on a spread sheet. Be specific: say “edited online survey instrument” rather than “worked on research.”

Team’s are to act democratically—each member must be responsible for input to the weekly time sheet, agenda, and advance questions. Failure to do so will result in lowered evaluations by peers and instructor which will lower your course grade. Note: UGA’s Honor Code applies to time sheets.

### ***Communicating with the Client.***

The account executive is responsible for communicating with the client—multiple contacts can create confusion. Each client knows s/he/they will need to spend time with your team, especially in the early weeks of the semester. I recommend at least a bi-weekly meeting—speak with the client about how they would like contact. Remember they must approve all materials prior to anything being sent out---allow time! They may have board members or others who need to review materials too.

Dress professionally for each client meeting. Be punctual and prepared. Have a list of what you need from them and what your questions are. Turn off cell phones. Followup each client meeting with an email summary. Reschedule the next meeting.

Remember your client probably knows little-to-nothing about public relations. They have a sense of what they “want” but they’re really (for the most part) unsure what you can do for them. You will likely have some educating to do—do it with respect.

### **Course Evaluations**

At the end of the semester you will have the opportunity to complete an evaluation of this course experience and my handling of the class. I will not be in the room and your anonymity is assured. Results will not be shared with me until next semester. Your opinions, thoughts, and suggestions are very important to me and the department—I want to deliver the very best course possible and need your input to do that.

Your evaluations of each of your peers are a very important component of each team member’s final course grade. No individual evaluation or comment will ever be shared with the person being evaluated---you will each receive a “summative” numerical score I assign based on scores from others on your team. Each individual team member is guaranteed anonymity on this important component of the class.

### **Academic Honesty**

*All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. <http://www.uga/honesty/ahpd/procedures/html>*

*Every aspect of this class is covered by the Honesty Code. Not only must you personally maintain the highest integrity in your work, it is your obligation to report others who you know are violating it.*

## Course Schedule<sup>1</sup>

### August

- 18 Introduction to Course, Review syllabus  
Student data forms  
Client overview
- 20 Team selections announced  
Client assignments.

Formal class disbands. Unless otherwise noted in the syllabus OR notified via a Google Group announcement all meetings will be with teams as designated below.

**From this point all team meetings will be held in the Yarbrough Lab, Grady 239-B**  
**Note: while other team is meeting with their client and/or the professor, you are to meet independently in a location you secure—consider the private rooms in the Drewry Room or study rooms in the MLC. During non-class times you can also reserve 239-B through ADPR department secretary Ms. Leblond.**

**Begin with secondary client research, related issue research, public opinion research, etc. Find out everything you can about not just your client but programs/initiatives similar to it in other communities, states, etc. Begin brainstorming about the types of primary research you think may be of value—you will ask your client about these in your initial briefing.**

**Phase 1:**<sup>2</sup> **Who is this client? What is their competitive environment? Their industry? What do they think their public relations needs are? What public relations strategies and tactics to they currently practice? How do we evaluate these? Marketing? Advertising? Online presence—website, twitter, Facebook, etc? How have they been covered in the media previously? Are there “hidden issues”?**

- 25 Client Briefing: **Oconee River Land Trust**
- 27 Client Briefing: **Athens/Oconee Audiology**

### September

1 Full class meeting. Each team provide an oral overview of your client, their needs, and how your team is dividing responsibilities. I will provide you with a sample Work Plan.

- 3 Teams work independently on Work Plans/”To Do” lists/**Research focus.**

---

<sup>1</sup> The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary

<sup>2</sup> Note: these are questions to guide you, not really to ask your client!

**Email professor draft of your Research Plan by Tuesday, 9/8, 9:00 am: All teams.**  
You may divide yourselves into sub-teams to spread the workload.

**8 Meeting: Oconee River Land Trust**

**10 Meeting : Athens/Oconee Audiology**

Research Plans Returned/Approved/Marked for Suggestions—representative from Land Trust Team come by 239 to pick up your team's

**15 Meeting: Oconee River Land Trust**

**17 Meeting: Athens/Oconee Audiology**

After team meetings September 15-17 teams will not meet with the Professor unless you request a meeting. All time should be devoted to completing focus groups, surveys, content analyses, etc---all the components of your approved research plan. Write your SA based on background information from your client and your secondary research. Write the SWOT analysis, one component of the SA, after you complete your primary research.

22 Teams work

24: Teams work **[Complete all Research/Situation Analysis (include swot)—Draft goals, objectives, and tasks]**

29. Teams work

## **October**

**1 Teams work**

**6 Teams work**

**8 Teams work**

**13 Research Report Due/Draft situation analysis/Draft goals, objectives, tasks due—have one team member deliver a hard copy to Sophie Barnes or Donna LeBlond by noon, October 13. DO NOT TAKE TIME OFF—BEGIN WORKING ON STRATEGIES AND TASKS TO ACCOMPLISH OBJECTIVES**

- 15 Full class meeting MLC 253: research reports returned. Drafts of SA, goals, objectives, tasks returned. Note: These items will not be evaluated again until the final report is received.**

**October 20-November 12**

- 20 Teams meet independently: Email professor final work plan that includes everything you are doing for client: strategies, tactics, evaluation, budget, timetables**
- 22 Professor will provide each team feedback on their final work plan – may pick up at 2:00 from Ms LeBlond or Ms Barnes**

**[Work on completion of all strategies & tactics; draft campaign book]**

**Thursday, November 12: All teams, Campaign Book Draft Due/Professor's Office, 2:00 pm**

**Tuesday, November 17: Pick up critiqued campaign book draft noon, Ms. Leblond or Ms Barnes**

**17-19 Teams work on finalizing book and on practicing final presentations**

**23-27 Thanksgiving Holiday**

**December**

- 1 Final Presentation  
Oconee River Land Trust, MLC 253**
- 3 Final Presentation  
Clarke/Oconee Audiology, MLC 253**

**Course evaluations will be completed during the last 10 minutes on December 1. Peer evaluations will be provided to each of you and due at the first of the class period on December 3. Peer evaluations should be completed in private and given to me in a sealed envelope with your name on the outside of the envelope.**

**Everyone must attend both presentations. Everyone must complete evaluations. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete grade for the class.**