

JRMC 7940: Public Relations Foundations

Fall 2009

2:30 – 5:30 p.m., M

Journalism, Rm. 205

Labs held in Room 242

Professor

Dr. Bryan Reber

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Office hours

1:30-2:30 W

and by appointment

Appointments can be made
before/after class or by phone
or e-mail during office hours

Course description

Public Relations Foundations is designed as a graduate-level introduction to public relations for those entering graduate students who have little or no undergraduate education in public relations. This course is designed for students with a public relations focus, introducing them to major issues in history, law and ethics, while providing an overview of the industry and practice. It also introduces them to basic public relations writing forms and techniques.

Course objectives

- To attain knowledge about public relations as a profession
- To attain knowledge about public relations history, law, and ethics
- To develop an understanding of public relations strategies and practices
- To examine specialties within the public relations profession
- To increase understanding of real life public relations problems through case studies
- To develop an understanding of ethical public relations practice, considering the social effects of public relations and the ways that decisions made by practitioners can impact society
- To develop and practice public relations writing skills
- To develop and practice presentational skills

Required texts

Cameron, G. T., D. L. Wilcox, B. H. Reber & J. Shin (2008). *Public Relations Today: Managing Competition and Conflict*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon

Listed assigned readings are available from the library in online course reserves (password: profound).

Other reading assignments from trade and consumer press will be made on a weekly basis.

Exams

There will be three exams (100 points each). There will be no make-up for missed exams.

Presentations

Each student will prepare two presentations (50 points each) based on one of the assigned readings. The student presenter will summarize the assigned reading, supplement information via her/his own research, and develop 4 to 5 discussion questions. The written portion of the assignment will be a short paper (3 to 4 pp) that includes: 1) a summary of the subject, 2) supplemental research to develop and extend the information provided by the assigned reading, 3) typewritten, open-ended discussion questions, and 4) a bibliography of 5 to 6 sources (including the assigned reading and text).

Writing projects

There will be several in- and out-of-class writing assignments (50 points each, 400 points total) including:

- Basic news release
- Feature news release
- Fact sheet
- Pitch letter
- Brochure copy
- Audio news release
- FAQ for a Web site
- Blog critique

Strategic plan

Each student will choose an organization for which to develop a strategic plan. You will select a non-profit or campus organization or small business, to be approved by the professor 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. For the final project you will produce:

- A **situation statement**, describing your client and including its mission and intended audiences, and identifying the specific problem(s)/opportunity(ies) you are solving/addressing (50 points)
- A **set of objectives** and an **outline of the research** steps that would be necessary to finalize the detailed public relations program to achieve your goals/objectives if you were implementing your project (50 points)
- A project **action plan**, a detailed outline of the situation, strategies you recommend to satisfy your program objectives appropriate to the situation, and including plans for how you would evaluate your campaign (50 points)

Grading

Exams 29%; Cases/presentation/participation 38%; Final project 32%

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Presentation 1	50 points
Presentation 2	50 points
Basic news release	50 points
Feature news release	50 points
Fact sheet	50 points
Pitch letter	50 points
Brochure copy	50 points
Audio news release	50 points
FAQ for Web site	50 points
Blog critique	50 points
Strategic plan	150 points
Participation	<u>50 points</u>
Total	1000 points

Grades will be assigned by the following percentages of total points:

94-100% A	77-79% C+
90-93% A-	74-76% C
87-89% B+	70-73% C-
84-86% B	67-69% D+
80-83% B-	64-66% D
	60-63% D-
	Below 60% F

Student conduct

This is a graduate level course. This course is designed to help move you toward public relations practice. Therefore, professional behavior is expected at all times. That means that punctuality and attendance are expected. Excessive tardiness or absence will result in a lowered final grade. Participation and preparation are expected. Reading assignments should be completed before class each day. Written work must be turned in on time. Exams will be taken as scheduled.

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. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>

Written assignments should be typed (no larger than 12 point) and double-spaced. When references are included, they should follow APA guidelines. Pay special attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation. **Grammatical errors will cost one (1) point each. Spelling errors will cost two (2) points each.**

Please turn off cell phones, pagers, or any PDAs before entering the classroom. No use of cell phones during class is acceptable, including texting.

Penalties for breaking conduct code:

More than **one unexcused absence** – deduction of one letter grade.

Chronic tardiness – deduction of one letter grade.

Late assignments – 10% per day overdue

Cheating – see the procedure outlined in the Student Handbook under "academic honesty". Students who are found guilty of cheating will receive an automatic grade of "F".

Students with disabilities

UGA and its Office for Disability Services are 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.

Tentative course calendar

This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The following is a proposed course schedule (dates are subject to change).

Week 1
8/17 Topic
 Course introduction

In-class Writing Assignment: Personal biography (1-3 pp, ungraded)

Week 2
8/24 What is Public Relations?

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 1
- Bowen, Shannon A., "I thought it would be more glamorous; Perceptions and misconceptions among students in the public relations principles course," *Public Relations Review* 29 (2), 2003, 199-214
- Lordan, Deward J., "Defining Public Relations and Press Roles in the 21st Century," *Public Relations Quarterly*, Summer 2005, 41-43
- Ruler, Betteke van, Dejan Vercic, Gerhard Butsch, and Bertil Flodin, "A first look for parameters of public relations in Europe," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 16(1), 2004, 35-63.

Week 3
8/31 What is Public Relations? Part II

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 2
- Lyon, Lisa, and Cameron, Glen T., "Fess up or stonewall?: An experimental test of prior reputation and response style in the face of negative news coverage," *Web Journal of Mass Communication Research* 1(4), September 1998, 1-24, www.scripps.ohiou.edu/wjmcr
- Pang, A., Y. Jin and Glen T. Cameron, "Do we stand on common ground: A threat appraisal model for terror alerts issued by the Department of Homeland Security," *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 14(2), 2006, 82-96
- Reber, Bryan H. and Bruce K. Berger, "Finding influence: Examining the role of influence in public relations practice," *Journal of Communication Management* 10(3), 2006, 235-249.

Week 4
9/7 Labor Day (NO CLASS)

Week 5
9/14 The Public Relations Process

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 5
- Beardsley, John, "Get smart: Using the right words at the right time," *The Strategist*, Spring 2006, 29-31.
- "How to measure relationships? Grunig/Hon study for Institute Measurement Commission lays groundwork," *PR Reporter* 42(40), October 11, 1999, 1-3.
- Lindenmann, Walter K., editor, *Guidelines and standards for measuring and evaluating PR effectiveness*. Gainesville, FL: Institute for Public Relations Research, University of Florida, 2003. (www.instituteforpr.com)
- Smuddle, P., "The five P's for media interviews: Fundamentals for newbies, veterans and everyone in between," *Public Relations Quarterly* 49(2), 2004, 29-34.

In-class Writing Assignment: Client Fact sheet (1 to 2 pp)

Week 6

9/21 Public Relations History and Development

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chps. 3, 4
- Choi, Youjin and Linda Childers Hon, "The influence of gender composition in powerful positions on public relations practitioners' gender-related perceptions," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 14(3), 2002, 229-263
- Mitroff, Ian, Gerald Swerling and Jennifer Floto, "Study proves value of public relations and finds self-doubt within the profession," *The Strategist*, Winter 2003, 32-34
- Rayburn, J. and V. Hazleton, "Survey provides profile of independent practitioner: Examines practice areas, income and profit," *Public Relations Tactics*, March 2005, 15-16.

In-class Writing Assignment: News Release (1-2 pp.)

Week 7

9/28 **Exam 1**

Public Relations Tactics

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 10
- Biro, Tom, "Get the blogging started: Tech tips for newbies," *Public Relations Tactics*, March 2006, 26-27.
- Gonzalez-Herrero, A. and M. Ruiz de Valbuena, "Trends in online media relations: Web-based corporate press rooms in leading international companies," *Public Relations Review* 32(3), 2006, 267-275.
- Iacono, Erica, "Lights, Camera and the power of TV," *PRWeek*, May 29, 2006, 15.
- Praeger, Jane, "Ten tips to make your presentation compelling," *Public Relations Tactics*, May 2004, 17.

Week 8

10/5 Public Opinion and Persuasion

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 6
- Arpan, Laura M. and David R. Roskos-Ewoldsen, "Stealing thunder: Analysis of the effects of proactive disclosure of crisis information," *Public Relations Review* 31(3), 2005, 425-433.
- Keller, Ed and Jon Berry, *The influentials: One American in ten tells the other nine how to vote, where to eat, and what to buy*, New York: Free Press, 2003, 1-172.

Writing Assignment: Feature Release (4 to 5 pp)

Week 9

10/12 Ethics and the Law

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 7
- Kim, Yungwook and Youjin Choi, "Ethical standards appear to change with age and ideology: A survey of practitioners," *Public Relations Review* 29(1), 79-89.
- Langston, R. Carter, "Public relations and the law: Six keys to winning in the court of law – and public opinion," *Public Relations Tactics*, March 2006, 14.

In-class Writing Assignment: Pitch Letter (1 to 2 pp)

Week 10

10/19 Ways of Reaching the Audience

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 8
- McGuire, Craig, "PSAs that speak the right language," *PRWeek*, May 27, 2006, 18.
- Morton, Linda, "PRSA publication managers' preferences for graphic designs," *Public Relations Review* 31(2), 2005, 281-283.

Writing Assignment: ANR (1 p)

Week 11

10/26 **Exam 2**
Ways of Reaching the Audience, Pt. 2

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 9
- Kioussis, Spiro and Daniela V. Dimitrova, "Differential impact of web site content: Exploring the influence of source (public relations vs. news), modality, and participation on college students' perceptions," *Public Relations Review* 32(2), 2006, 177-179.
- Porter, Lance V. and Lynne M. Sallot, "Web power: A survey of practitioners' world wide web use and their perceptions of its effects on their decision-making power," *Public Relations Review* 31, 2005, 111-119.
- Taylor, Maureen, and Danielle C. Perry, "Diffusion of traditional and new media tactics in crisis communication," *Public Relations Review* 31, 2005, 209-217.

Week 12

11/2 International Public Relations

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 11
- "Anti-Americanism: The view from abroad," *Economist*, February 19, 2005, 24-25.
- Badler, Dick, "10 rules for building a successful global corporate communications organization," *The Strategist*, Winter 2004, 18-21.
- Freitag, Alan R., "Ascending cultural competence potential: An assessment and profile of U.S. public relations practitioners' preparation for international assignments," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 14(3), 2002, 207-227.
- Lee, Suman, "An analysis of other countries' international public relations in the U.S.," *Public Relations Review* 32(2), 2006, 97-103.
- Ward, David, "Rehearsing for the PR World Tour," *PRWeek*, January 31, 2005, 24.

Writing Assignment: Strategic Plan draft (ungraded)

Week 13

11/9 For-Profit Public Relations

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 12
- Herskovits, Beth, "The PR road show: Working with touring exhibitions offers rich and varied opportunities," *PRWeek*, May 2, 2005, 17.
- Park, Dong-Jin and Bruce K. Berger, "The presentation of CEOs in the press, 1990-2000: Increasing salience, positive valence, and a focus on competency and personal dimensions of image," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 16(1), 2004, 93-125.

Writing Assignment: Brochure copy (2 to 4 pp)

Week 14

11/16 Not-For-Profit Public Relations

Reading Assignment:

- Cameron et al., Chp. 13
- Hand, Mark, "Nonprofit sharing: PR pros in the nonprofit area often have to do more with less," *PRWeek*, January 9, 2006, 19.
- Kang, Seok and Hanna E. Norton, "Nonprofit organizations' use of the world wide web: Are they sufficiently fulfilling organizational goals?," *Public Relations Review* 30(3), 2004, 279-284.

Writing Assignment: FAQ for Web site (2 to 4 pp)
Blog critique (1 to 2 pp)

Week 15

11/23 **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 16

11/30 Presentation of strategic plans

Writing Assignment: Final strategic plan due

Finals Week

12/7 **Final Exam**, 3:30-6:30 p.m.