

## **Journalism 350, Principles of Public Relations**

Spring 2008 - Mondays 6:00 p.m. to 9:20 p.m.

Grace Ford Salvation Hall - Room 213

**Erin K. Freeman, Adjunct Professor**

### **TEXT REQUIREMENTS:**

Textbook: *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, Wilcox, Cameron, Ault & Agee, 1999.

Additionally: Read *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, or another newspaper (a local and a national) daily; news magazines such as *Fortune* or *TIME*; watch television news, magazine and interview shows; listen to radio news and talk radio. In other words, be familiar with a wide array of news media and be up on current events every class session.

*We will discuss recent news events during class. I expect you to stay current on news events and be able to share your perspective and make recommendations for alternative responses that might lead to better outcomes.*

### **COURSE OBJECTIVE:**

This course is designed to introduce you to public relations as a professional practice. How is public relations defined? What disciplines make up the public relations profession? What are the tenets of public relations? Where might you fit in? How is public relations practiced here and abroad; in a corporation and in an agency; in the political arena and in the non-profit sector?

Public relations means different things to different people. We will define what it means to be a public relations professional, how you learn the public relations craft and how you develop and hone your public relations skills. We will cover the basic process of public relations -- research, planning, communication, evaluation -- and the use of communications strategies to achieve organizational goals.

Through lectures, reading, brainstorming sessions, guest speakers, research, writing, teamwork and individual effort, we will explore the world of PR.

### **WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:**

1. Class starts at 6 p.m. Tardiness and absences will be detrimental to your final grade. You don't have to ask me permission to miss a class, leave early or come late. I leave those decisions to you. Since we only meet once a week, obviously missing class will leave a gap in your information. I suggest you find someone in class you can call to get notes, assignments and handouts from any missed classes.
2. Assignments are due to me in person at the beginning of class. Faxed or e-mailed assignments are not accepted, unless designated by me in advance of class. You are allowed one late assignment that will be graded a full grade lower. If you forget your homework, it is considered late. All assignments will be complete and typed.
3. Class participation is expected and will help your final grade.
4. There will be no make-ups for the mid-term. There will be no extensions for the term paper or oral presentation. You must complete the mid-term, term paper and oral presentation to pass the class.
5. Public Relations is a field where details matter. I am a stickler for grammar and adherence to Associated Press Style Guidelines. A paper or an assignment with excessive grammatical errors

or typos will be returned for proofing prior to grading. Your grade will be marked down a half grade for every time this occurs.

### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:**

Now that I've scared you, let me help you relax...

1. I enjoy the field of public relations, believe in its value and love to teach. I will come to class each week with the goal of helping you prepare for the world of public relations. My hope is to make this class interesting, fun, worthwhile and something to look forward to.
2. I take a practical approach to teaching. I want you to understand theory, but more important than that, I want you to understand how it applies in the real world.
3. I am open to your questions and welcome the opportunity to discuss any issues concerning you.
4. This syllabus is a general guideline for what we will cover during the semester. Other assignments, such as written homework and class projects, will be assigned.
5. Everything in this syllabus will be covered. However, the schedule may change to accommodate the calendars of guest speakers.

### **THE FOLLOWING IS THE USC SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM'S ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.**

Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in public relations and journalism this means appropriating the words of another without clear attribution. The following is the Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the University catalog: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to this policy."

**NOTE ON PLAGIARISM:** Everything you turn in to me as an assignment must be written solely by you. Do not rely in any way on source material. As you research for a writing assignment, absorb the information, but do not directly use any of the material from your findings. Any use of material from another source is considered plagiarism and can result in your dismissal from the University.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:** Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

### **INTERNSHIPS**

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course who undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

### **ELEMENTS OF J-350**

- Reading assignments
- Press Release writing

- Case studies
- Brainstorming
- Research and writing
- Mid-term exam
- Term project and presentation

## **GRADING**

Participation	10%
Homework/Project Proposal/Press Release	20%
Mid-Term	25%
Term project	20%
Final Exam	25%

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### **January 14, 2008**

Introductions  
Goal, objectives and my approach to teaching  
Guest speakers  
Syllabus review  
Policies and procedures  
Term project review  
**Homework:** Read preface and chapters 1, 2 and 3

### **January 21, 2008**

NO CLASS – Martin Luther King Holiday

### **January 28, 2008**

History of PR  
Functions of PR  
Model of Public Relations  
Public Relations  
    Defining what it is  
    Misconceptions about public relations  
The Ethics of Public Relations  
**Homework:** Read chapters 4 and 5

### **February 4, 2008**

What makes a successful PR practitioner?  
Possible career tracts and roles  
Organizational Structure  
PR Departments and Firms  
**Homework:** Read chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9

### **February 11, 2008**

Research: Why it's important, how it's done and how to use it  
Planning: The value of a communications plan and how to create one.  
Communication : A Public Relations Perspective  
Evaluation: How'd we do?  
**Homework:** Read chapters 20, 21 and 22  
*Term Project Proposals Due: February 25!*

### **February 18, 2008**

No class – President's Day Holiday

### **February 25, 2008**

Good writing – invaluable and achievable  
Oral communication – Forget the ums and ahs, but don't forget your point  
How to enhance your point – visual aids and props  
Overview of Press Release Assignment  
*Turn in Project Proposals*  
*Midterm Exam review*  
**Homework:** Study for Midterm Exam

**March 3, 2008**

*Midterm Exam (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 20, 21, 22)*

**Homework:** Read chapters 10, 11 and 12

**March 10, 2008**

Public opinion and tactics for persuasion

Audience segmentation

New technologies and impact on PR

**Homework:** Read chapters 13 and 14 - *Press Release assignment*

**March 17, 2008**

No Class – Spring Recess

**March 24, 2008**

PR and legal issues

Privacy, copyright and trademark issues

Role of government and regulatory agencies

PR in corporations

*Turn in Press Release assignment*

**Homework:** Chapter 15 and 16

**March 31, 2008**

**April 7, 2008**

Political PR

International PR

**Homework:** Read chapters 17 and 18

**April 14, 2008**

Special needs of non-profits

Education

**Homework:** Read chapter 19 - *Term project presentations and term paper*

**April 21, 2008**

Entertainment, Sports and Travel PR

*Term project presentations*

**April 28, 2008**

*Term project presentations*

**May 5, 2008**

No class – Study Day

**May 14, 2008**

Final Exam (chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19)

Written term project due by 6:00 p.m. to me via email