

JOURNALISM 350 -- PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Spring 2008

Wednesdays, 6 p.m. -- 9:20 p.m.

ASC 223

INSTRUCTOR:

Kate Flynn Jacobs

TEXT REQUIREMENTS:

Textbook: *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, 8th edition, Wilcox, Cameron, Ault & Agee, 2007.

Additionally: Read *The Los Angeles Times*, at least one other newspaper, preferably national. Peruse news magazines such as *Newsweek* or *TIME*; watch television news, magazine and interview shows; listen to radio news and talk radio. Surf the net and check out a variety of news and current event sites such as laobserved.com. In other words, be familiar with a wide array of news media and be up on current events.

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 the 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.

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COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of Journalism 350, Principles of Public Relations, students can expect the following level of understanding:

1. A keen understanding of how public relations is defined and practiced -- by career, by discipline, and by personal interest.
2. A strongly developed awareness of the myriad specialized choices that exist for a public relations professional.
3. A foundation for comprehending why and how public relations is employed by everything from big business to small.
4. A practical knowledge of the rationale for, and process to achieve, sophisticated, disciplined planning rather than a purely tactical approach.
5. A basic understanding of the profession sufficient to succeed in USC Annenberg's undergraduate Public Relations Studies program.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

1. Class starts at 6 p.m. Tardiness and absences will be detrimental to your final grade. You do not 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 learning. I suggest you find someone in class you can call to get notes, assignments and handouts from any missed classes.
2. There will be quizzes. If you are late and a quiz is in progress, you may not take it, nor can you make it up.
3. Assignments are due to me in person at the beginning of class. You are allowed one late assignment that will be graded a full grade lower and is due to me by 9 a.m. the Thursday after class. If you forget your homework, it is considered late. All assignments will be complete and typed, with no handwritten edits.
4. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a fellow student. I do not e-mail assignments or notes if you have missed class.
5. Class participation is expected and will help your final grade. Everyone is expected to contribute.
6. There should only be one discussion going on at a time in class. Please do not have side conversations as it is disruptive. Paying attention to the speaker, whether it is the instructor or a fellow student is a sign of respect and professionalism.
7. There will be no make-ups for the mid-term. There will be no extensions for the term paper or final project. You must complete the mid-term, term paper and final project to pass the class.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:

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

1. I take the teaching of this course seriously and I enjoy the interaction with students. I will come 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 which you look forward.
2. I am open to your questions and welcome the opportunity to discuss any issues concerning you.
3. 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.
4. 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 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course.

GRADING

Quizzes/Homework	5%
Case presentation	15%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Term paper	30%
Final project	20%
Participation	10%

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

CLASS 1: Jan. 16

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF J-350

A: Housekeeping

- *Syllabus review
- *Policies and procedures

B: Public Relations

- *Defining what it is
- *Misconceptions about public relations
- *What might your role be?

HOMEWORK:

- 1) Review next Monday's Los Angeles Times and bring it to class with you.
- 2) Read preface, chapters 1 and 2

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CLASS 2: Jan. 23

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

- A: The history of PR - how it got started; how it has evolved
- B: The functions of PR
- C: The model of public relations
- E: Term paper -- What you need to know

HOMEWORK: Read chapters 5 and 6

CLASS 3: Jan. 30

NOW THAT WE KNOW WHAT PUBLIC RELATIONS IS, HOW DO WE DO IT?

- A: The public relations process - Parts One and Two
 - Research: why is it important; how is it done; how to use it
 - Planning: the value of a communications plan; how to create one.

HOMEWORK: Read chapters 7 and 8

CLASS 4: Feb 6

**NOW THAT WE KNOW HOW TO DO IT,
HOW DO I KNOW IF I DID IT RIGHT OR WELL?**

- A: Public relations process - Parts Three and Four
 - Communication - a public relations perspective
 - Evaluation - How'd we do?

HOMEWORK: Read Chapters 9 and 11

CLASS 5: Feb. 13

THE WHO, THE WHAT AND THE WHY

- A: Defining your audience
- B: Targeting your message
- C: Persuading your audience

CLASS 6: Feb. 20

THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR: GOOD COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

- A: Good writing - invaluable and achievable
- B: Oral communication - Forget the ums and ahs, but don't forget your point.
- C: How to enhance your point - visual aids and props
- D: Mid-term review

HOMEWORK: Study for mid-term exam

CLASS 7: Feb. 27

MID-TERM EXAMINATION

HOMEWORK: Read Chapters 4 and 17

CLASS 8: March 5

THE WORLD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

- A: Delving into the details - what options are there?
- B: Where can I fit it and what does it take?

HOMEWORK:

1. Read Chapters 3 and 12
2. Begin Case Study work
3. Term paper proposals due next week

CLASS 9: March 12

YOUR REPUTATION IS EVERYTHING

A: The Ethics of Public Relations - Let your conscience be your guide, but here are some rules to follow as well.

B: Term paper proposals

HOMEWORK:

1. Read Chapter 10
2. Continue Case Study work

CLASS 10: March 26

GROUP THINK

A: Case presentations: Groups 1 and 2

B: Case presentations: Groups 3 and 4

C. What to do when your worst case scenario comes true.

HOMEWORK:

1. Read Chapters 18 and 21
2. Term paper topics due next week

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CLASS 11: April 2

LET'S HEAR FROM THE PROS

A: DEFINING FURTHER THE DIFFERENT PR DISCIPLINES

- Political
- Education

HOMEWORK: Read Chapters 19 and 20

CLASS 12: April 9

MORE PROSE FROM THE PROS

A: PR DISCIPLINES, PART 2

- International
- Nonprofit

HOMEWORK: Read chapter 22

CLASS 13: April 16

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

A: The world of sports and entertainment, which are sometimes one and the same.

HOMEWORK: TERM PAPERS DUE NEXT WEEK

CLASS 14: April 23

TERM PAPERS DUE TODAY

GUEST SPEAKER

CLASS 15: April 30

- Review
- Handing out of final project assignment

FINAL EXAM – May 7, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

- No in-class final exam. Final project due by 7 p.m.
- Term papers handed back.

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