

Undergraduate Public Relations Course Description Handbook

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PR 209 Effective Writing for Strategic Public Relations and Advertising

This course is an intensive, hands-on writing course designed to provide students with the following:

1. An understanding of proper writing styles with sensitivity to the requirements of different situations, media and publications.
2. Competence in writing mechanics and grammar, headlines, labels, structure and the ability to express information clearly to the intended audience(s).

3. Confidence in judging importance and making content decisions in writing.
4. An understanding of what constitutes news and the nuances of how it is defined by a wide variety of media: general news publications and broadcast outlets, specialized trade publications, websites, blogs and internal communications.
5. Familiarity with persuasive writing techniques and knowledge of when to apply them.
6. Successful completion of the required GPS Exam.
7. Enhanced storytelling ability.

PR 250 Strategic Public Relations and Advertising: An Introduction

This course will familiarize students with strategies and practices in the growing field of public relations and advertising through analysis of landmark cases with special emphasis on historical roots, evolution, current and future practices. An array of guest speakers from all walks of the PR profession will share their insights into the vast PR world. This course is the foundation of the public relations program.

PR 340 Introduction to Advertising

This course is for the undergraduate student interested in learning the fundamentals of today's advertising profession and its role in marketing communications. The foundation of advertising is persuasion: the effort to persuade someone somewhere to do something, usually with respect to a commercial offering. Because advertising lives and breathes in contemporary culture, it is a discipline in transition, reverberating from the many radical disruptions and transformations in today's society, due to changes in technology, economic circumstances, and human behavior.

PR 351A Multichannel Strategy and Content Creation

Today's public relations professional needs to understand and be competent in many forms of communication. The business world they work in is rapidly evolving with earned, owned and paid media converging. Media relations, social media content creation and influencer engagement, and paid media are now equally important for any organization's strategic communications. The role of the public relations practitioner has changed to reflect this shift and training needs to include intensive writing plus creating high-quality multimedia content for traditional, emerging and social media. This class is an intensive, hands-on lab course designed to provide students with the skills necessary to engage with, and produce compelling content for, contemporary media channels of all types.

PR 351B Multichannel Strategy and Content Creation

This course will examine media that is created and published by today's public relations practitioner. Web 2.0 platforms have enabled brands, organizations and individuals to become publishers and directly engage their audiences. This class examines strategies and tactics needed to be an effective publisher including digital content created for social and owned media channels.

This course is designed to teach students about the array of public relations tools available to them, with particular emphasis on writing, digital content creation and production of other communications collateral. Students will be exposed to audience research and segmentation, social media and digital communications writing, multi-media content creation, feature writing, newsletter preparation, basic principles of design, video production and brainstorming. Case histories will illuminate the use of these tools and examples of materials will be used extensively throughout the course. This is a lab course; a great deal of hands-on activities such as writing, graphic design, video production and oral presentations will be assigned.

PR 352 Public Relations Media and Content for Non-Majors

Building on the journalistic and PR writing standards that students mastered in their PR 209 course, PR 352 gives them the opportunity to apply those standards to earned and controlled media. The foundation of the course is to build content for a staple in the PR world: the Information Kit. Students will learn advanced writing and editing, basic design skills and fairly sophisticated video planning, shooting, editing and production skills, all with an eye toward devising persuasive content.

PR 400 Practicum for PR Media Center

This course is a hands-on learning lab for students to practice social media management, public relations, promotion, internal communications and marketing concepts through public-facing work for the multiplatform Annenberg Media, a student news outlet housed in the Annenberg Media Center. Annenberg Media airs live television and radio broadcasts Monday through Thursday and covers campus, local and global news online and on social media.

Students in this course will have the opportunity to create original content and amplify existing content created by the editorial and production teams for television or digital journalism, all while adhering to news production cycle.

PR 426 Influencer Relations

Influencers have transformed the world of corporate communications, forever changing marketing, advertising and public relations. This course is designed for those who wish to understand, manage and work within the contemporary ecosystem of brands, social media and influencers. From identifying appropriate influencers to making contracts with them, from the ethics of disclosure to the politics of gender and race representation, this course will give you an up-to-date conceptual and practical understanding of the issues and procedures that affect the world of influencers. If you want to learn about the dynamic, global, and rapidly growing world of influencers, and become prepared to work in or with it, then this is course for you.

PR 427 Structured Inquiry in Public Relations and Advertising

Apply contemporary research methods to create actionable insights for integrated, multi-channel communication campaigns, including social media monitoring, measurement and evaluation.

PR 429 Business and Economic Foundations of Public Relations and Advertising

As public relations and communication are evolving into a discipline that is central to the success of organizations of all types, practitioners increasingly need to be familiar with fundamental aspects of business and economics as they relate to the corporate communication function. To be a valuable counselor to the executive management team and/or clients, PR practitioners need to be conversant in the language of the boardroom.

At the same time, changes in the media landscape and the rise of social media have created a dynamic employment market, lowering the threshold for entrepreneurially minded practitioners to build their own communication firms. This requires a solid understanding of media and consultancy business models.

PR 431 Integrated Media Planning and Buying

Integrated Communications Planning provides a foundation of integrated media communication and the roles it plays in marketing communications. Paid, earned and owned forms of media will be covered with the primary emphasis on paid media. The course will examine the constantly evolving media landscape and career paths in media as well as the principles and fundamentals of media planning, buying and selling and the role each plays in executing media successful campaigns.

PR 432 Concepting: Advertising Strategy and Creative Development

This class is for students interested in learning the roles of the planner and copywriter in the development and execution of advertising campaigns and ads. Before a television commercial is shot, before a print or display ad is designed, or an out-of-home campaign is written, someone has to have an idea – a concept. This course introduces “concepting” as the heart of the creative process – how to develop an idea and then what to do with that idea to create advertisements that cut through the clutter and communicate persuasively. Presenting, selling your ideas, are an integral to class participation.

PR 433 Advertising and Technology

This is a hands-on course embedded both on campus and inside the thriving Los Angeles tech sector, designed to introduce students to the latest digital tools, platforms, media, channels, and techniques to prepare them to be ready for today’s vibrant marketing landscape. Students will become strategic practitioners of the modern advertising world, and will be provided with a competitive advantage when they enter the industry.

PR 434 Advertising Campaign Construction

This course provides students with the opportunity to research, ideate and execute comprehensive marketing communications plans that address professional-level marketing challenges. Students are expected to think and act like advertising professionals by developing a strategic, creative, and potentially effective solution to a marketing challenge proposed by their “client.” Each team entry will be reviewed and judged by national industry professionals of various disciplines.

PR 435 Advertising Copywriting

Master the art of advertising copywriting. Develop breakthrough concepts and craft compelling campaigns across all media channels. Transform creativity into strategic impact.

PR 444 Lifestyle Public Relations

The course examines the growing practice areas that comprise Lifestyle PR: specifically fashion, food, hospitality, travel and tourism. Different from the traditional notion of consumer brand marketing, Lifestyle PR taps into the behavioral insights we can draw from purchasing, travel, dining and other data. Coursework includes preparing an assigned Case of the Week from within the various emphases, crafting and launching an original personal blog, and an in-depth look at the media/personalities that influence these practice areas. Throughout the course, we will tie insights to trends, while still examining the fun surrounding these categories. Guest speakers who practice PR in these lifestyle spaces will expand students' knowledge about the career paths, the special skills needed to succeed and the challenges they face.

PR 445 Fundamentals of Food Communication

This course will propose, consider, and analyze the different relationships between communication and food and how these relationships negotiate our identities, cultures, and environments.

PR 450 Building Integrated Campaigns

This course serves as the "capstone" course for the Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations. It synthesizes all of the material covered in prior courses; brings that material to bear on case analyses and campaign development; puts that material in a strategic context; and strengthens the student's ability to apply those skills to elements of the campaign development process. Students will research, write and present a campaign to an actual client.

PR 452 Public Relations in Entertainment

Public relations in the design, promotion and presentation of popular entertainment, including films, broadcasting, music, expositions, amusement parks, legitimate theater (Broadway/off Broadway) resorts and arenas. Students will learn historical context, tactics and strategies used in entertainment PR with the integration of real world and real time examples.

PR 453 Public Relations Strategies for Working with Athletes

This course examines the communication strategies of professional athletes, their public relations and branding teams, and media. We will study and analyze through highly interactive discussions how athletes build (and diminish) the brand of their team and sponsors. Professional athletes communicate to a wide variety of audiences. Their communication teams must strategize to reach each of these audiences and create a positive impression of the athlete before each of these audiences. We will explore the various messages created in the name of the athletes, messages that may, at times, seem self-contradictory. We will discuss ways in which communication teams create a larger brand for athletes that is meant to subsume and make sense of these various communicated images. Students will learn theories of sports communication and have the opportunity to interact with many high-level professionals who employ those theories to create effective communication strategies for athletes.

PR 454 Sports Public Relations

This course is designed to introduce you to the wide-ranging field of sports public relations. The objective of this class is to prepare you for an entry-level position in the sports public relations field. The course will include discussions regarding various aspects of sports public relations, presentations by professionals associated with the field, writing assignments and role-playing exercises.

PR 455 Public Relations for Non-Profit Organizations

Introduction to the specialized field of public relations for non-profits including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), advocacy organizations and private foundations. This course is appropriate for students who want to learn the history of non-profits, the fundamentals of how they are governed and organized, the importance of strategy and fundraising, cause-marketing campaigns and the blurring of lines with for-profit social enterprise efforts, and how to develop and implement a comprehensive public relations campaign for a non-profit organization of the student's choosing. Through lecture, group assignments, and student-led critiques and discussions, this course will examine case studies and present-day scenarios, require the development of a public relations campaign, and culminate in crafting a case study assessing the effectiveness of an assigned NGOs public relations campaign.

PR 457 The Role of Celebrity in Public Relations

This course examines the history and application of the celebrity in Public Relations. While the main focus will be the entertainment industry, we will also explore politics and other fields (sports, fashion, etc.), looking at both traditional and social media. We will investigate what it means to be a “celebrity” in the 21st century via case studies, news articles and guest speakers.

PR 458 Public Relations in Politics and Political Campaigns

This course will teach public relations strategy and tactics in the context of a political campaign, but the key concepts will be applicable to almost any persuasive and motivational messaging challenge. Students will learn the principles of campaign message development, and will be asked to practically apply those lessons by developing campaign messages of their own for both real and hypothetical candidates. They will be asked to attempt to deliver campaign messages as well, both in writing and in classroom exercises that require them to play the role of both candidate and campaign strategist by participating in mock news conferences, ad tests, and other simulations of real-life campaign experiences. By the end of the semester, they will be prepared to write a full-length campaign strategy prospectus on behalf of a political candidate or cause of their choosing.

PR 464 Advanced Lifestyle Public Relations

Advanced Lifestyle PR gives students an in-depth look at the various aspects that comprise Lifestyle PR. The course will offer special emphasis on food, fashion and beauty, but also will examine other lifestyle elements such as travel/tourism, hospitality, furniture/housewares, toys and more.

PR 478 Social Media Analytics: Data and Content Creation for Real-time Public Relations

Students will learn to work as a social media analyst and real-time content creator for today’s social web. Much of this course takes place in the Annenberg Media Center and focuses on the interaction between PR practitioners and news media outlets.

In an environment much like that found in sophisticated PR organizations, students will use cloud-based software applications to set up topic profiles; refine the data stream; analyze the data stream looking for influencers, news sources and other salient information; create data visualizations for rapid insights; and archive data for other research projects.

The course will include one 3-hour shift per week as a social media analyst for the converged media center during which time you will be primarily responsible for its live operation.

PR 481 Careers and Strategies in Health Communication

Understanding of the dynamic, changing world of U.S. healthcare; knowledge of healthcare audiences and how to reach them; creating effective strategic communications initiatives.

PR 486 Multimedia PR Content: Introduction to Digital Design Tools

It’s increasingly important that public relations professionals not only be good at writing for an array of audiences, but also have an understanding of basic design principles and a fluency in digital design tools, such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. While many organizations may employ outside designers, or have an art department of their own, sometimes the task of creating smaller design collateral, such as postcards, Infographics or posters, falls to the PR practitioner. For many smaller firms, an art department or contract design help may not be available, so it is even more imperative to have a basic understanding of how to design collateral and execute these designs in the above programs. These are also important skills to have when communicating with an art department or outside designer, so you can clearly and effectively work with these parties and understand their needs.

PR 487 Multimedia PR Content: Introduction to Audio/Video Tools

This hands-on workshop introduces students to essential audio/video concepts and tools needed to create compelling narratives and content for an online world of completely digital distribution. Students will learn the basics, technical knowledge of video production including necessary software tools, and learn to manage their online video content and utilize it to build their personal brand and that of clients. Students will conceive, write, shoot, edit, export, deliver and export their own digital stories by:

1. learning the underlying principles of narrative, intentionality of design, and video production
2. practicing the basics of digital video making tools (Adobe Creative Cloud)
3. better understanding of new media and the online content landscape
4. becoming proficient in visual and audio tools/trends
5. developing new communication, engagement, and narrative skills
6. creating an online digital portfolio, brand and platform focused on their creative output in the class to attract future employers

Class exercises will be a combination of team projects and individual assignments.

PR 488 Multimedia PR Content: Visual Communication of Information

It's increasingly important that public relations professionals not only be good at writing for an array of audiences, but also have an understanding of basic design principles and a fluency in digital design tools, such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. While many organizations may employ outside designers, or have an art department of their own, sometimes the task of creating smaller design collateral, such as postcards, Infographics or posters, falls to the PR practitioner. For many smaller firms, an art department or contract design help may not be available, so it is even more imperative to have a basic understanding of how to design collateral and execute these designs in the above programs. These are also important skills to have when communicating with an art department or outside designer, so you can clearly and effectively work with these parties and understand their needs. This course will also serve as an introduction in designing for the web, and highlight the major differences between designing print collateral and digital collateral and websites.

PR 491 Transmedia, New Media and Strategic Public Relations

We are in the midst of a period of profound and prolonged media change, which is impacting the ways companies and individuals connect. The rules of branding and strategic communication are shifting to accommodate new technologies, new connections, and new social worlds. Exploring the way that traditional and social media interact, the way that media converge, and the way that platforms organize new commitments and forms of contribution is core to the understanding of how public relations, branding, social media management, and strategic communication of all forms are combining. This course examines the boundary of these forms and takes a practical, future-oriented approach to preparing new strategies and tactical combinations for transmedia branding.

PR 492 Personal Branding

This course will take a highly focused approach to understanding the strategic public relations discipline specifically as it applies to personal brands, including those of communication entrepreneurs who serve personal brands, those "client" personal brands themselves, and the students enrolled in the course. This will be achieved primarily through the analysis of contemporary case studies and creative problem solving.

The course will help students gain real world practical experience by working with current personal brands in a variety of industries. It will equip each student with the tools needed to explore his or her own unique skill set, goals, and personal brand attributes as they prepare for a career in the public relations field.

Special emphasis will be placed on the analysis and use of new and emerging digital/social media channels, which are, and will continue to have, a profound effect on the creation and maintenance of personal brands.

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