

University of North Carolina at Wilmington
COM 422: Advanced Public Relations
Course Syllabus
Spring 2011

Course Section: 001
CRN: 24370
12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. --TR
Leutze Hall 134

Final Exam Period: Thursday, May 5, 2011
11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Instructor Information:

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Office Hours: 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. TR;
12:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. MW;
and by appointment

Course Description:

Every person, organization, team, group, etc. must develop and maintain positive relationships with other groups and individuals in order to survive and thrive. The knowledge acquired in the introductory class is now put into practice. This course gives students an opportunity to further their understanding of PR concepts by working with a non-profit organization to create a PR campaign. COM 322—Intro to PR is a prerequisite for this course. In this course, the student will

- ✓ Foster a thorough understanding of the public relations process
- ✓ Learn the basic concepts of publicity and the differences between publicity and promotion
- ✓ Develop communication strategies to promote events and manage crises
- ✓ Learn how to prepare for and conduct a press conference
- ✓ Examine contemporary public relations issues
- ✓ Acquire professional experience working with a client in a team environment
- ✓ Prepare and present a public relations campaign plan to compete for a client

Required Course Materials:

Gregory, A (2010). Planning and Managing Public Relations Campaigns. (3ed) London: Kogan Page Limited.

Additional readings may be obtained through online databases, accessible from the UNCW library website.

Course Requirements:

✓ Quizzes	100 pts
✓ Written Survey	50
✓ Research Report	100
✓ Project Proposal	50
✓ Press Conference	150
✓ Rough Draft	50
✓ Final Report	200
✓ Final Presentation	100
✓ Peer Evaluations	100
✓ Participation	100
✓ Brochure	100
✓ Print Ad	100
Total Points	1200

Brief Description of Graded Assignments:

Quizzes (8.3% of your overall course grade)

Quizzes will be administered at various points throughout the semester, primarily focused on the PR plan—how to properly write a PR plan. The quizzes will account for 100 points toward the overall course total.

Participation (8.3 % of your overall grade)

Participation includes in-class activities/exercises, quality of contribution to class discussions, current event pop quizzes, brief out-of-class assignments, as well as the ability to arrive to class on time. Students should get in the habit of keeping up with current events, which will help to facilitate intelligent class discussions.

Participation in this class means being actively involved in class discussions and presentations. Active involvement means being prepared for class, providing relevant insight into class discussions or presentations, asking respectful questions, and giving your undivided attention to your classmates, the instructor, and guest presenters. Active involvement does not mean doing work for other classes, eating, or carrying on side conversations during class.

Press Conference Exercise (12.5%)

In assigned groups, students will conduct a mock press conference, involving both prepared components and the handling of impromptu situations. All group members will receive the same grade. This exercise is worth 150 points toward the overall course total.

Group Project (70.8%)

Each student will be assigned to a group and an agency/organization. The group will be responsible for creating a PR plan that meets the agency and instructor's requirements.

The group project has several graded components (see below), as well as required meetings with agency representatives and the instructor.

The group project point breakdown is as follows:

Grading Scale:

Final grades will be assigned according to the following system. The total number of points earned by the student will be divided by the total number of points in the course, and multiplied by 100%. Then the scale below will be used to assign final grades:

A	93-100 percent
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	below 60

For example, if a student's total points in the course are 1025, this is how the math would work out:

$$1025/1200 = 0.8541$$

$$0.8541 \times 100 = 85.4$$

According to the scale above, the student would earn a final grade of B in the course.

Course Policies, Procedures, and Expectations:

☐ Attendance Policy

- Attendance is required in order to do well in this course. A great deal of learning takes place during in-class discussions and activities. Missing class will have a negative impact on your participation grade.
- An attendance sheet will be distributed during each regular class meeting, with the exception of exam/presentation days. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet. I reserve the right to count you as absent if you fail to sign the sheet.
- You are granted three (3) absences for whatever reason. I do not need to see a note, nor do I need to know why you missed class. Use your allotted absences wisely. Save them for emergencies such as

family tragedies or illnesses. For each absence exceeding three, five (5) percentage points will be deducted from your final course grade.

- If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what material was covered and what is to be expected of you for the next class meeting.
- Please see me ASAP for documented, extenuating circumstances that will force you to exceed three absences (i.e., athletes who will miss due to team travel, or prolonged illnesses such as mono), and I will do my best to work with you. If you wait until the last day of class to discuss your “extenuating circumstances” with me, you waive your right to any special considerations.
- Please do not be late to class. It is distracting not only to myself, but also to other students. Tardies have a negative impact on your participation grade.
- There will be certain days (i.e., when we have a guest speaker or student presentations) that students will not be permitted to enter class after we have begun. This means that if you do not arrive on time, you will be counted as absent.

☐ UNCW Department of COM Studies Electronic Devices Statement

- Faculty in the Department of Communication Studies highly value technology, including various technological devices such as cell phones, MP3 players, etc. We believe, however, that these devices should not be turned on during class time. The use of electronic communication devices in class distracts users and others around them, including the professor who is teaching the course. In short, these devices hinder the processes of learning and instruction. Using them in class also reveals a student to be deficient in one of the core skills promoted by our department; civility (defined as “Showing regard for the dignity of other people and the importance of social expectations.”) Therefore, we ask that all students turn off all electronic devices prior to the start of class, with the exception of laptops, which may be used solely for taking notes and approved work explicitly allowed by the instructor. Laptops may not be used to log onto the internet during class time. If you are expecting an important call during class and believe you absolutely need to have your phone on, please let your professor know before class begins to avoid any problems.

☐ My Personal Cell Phone/Laptop/IM Policy

- Cell phones should be silenced or turned off prior to the beginning of class.
- If your phone goes off during class, you will lose participation points for that day.
- Use of laptops for the purpose of taking notes only is permitted.
- Students who engage in distracting behavior during class (including but not limited to conversations or text messaging with their cell phone, or instant messaging or surfing the internet with their laptop) will forfeit participation and attendance points for that class period, and be asked to leave.

☐ Make-Up Work

- If you fail to appear for an exam, assignment, quiz, or activity, you will receive a zero.
- I will NOT accept late work under any circumstances. I will, however, gladly accept early assignments.

☐ Group Work (parts borrowed from Dr. Rick Olsen)

- Probably the biggest key to your success and satisfaction in this course is working effectively together in your group. In this class, you will be completing a significant amount of work in teams. Here are some key pointers on working in your group:
 1. Take individual responsibility for the group’s success. Do more than your share of the work.
 2. Set up clear lines of communication and use them! Exchange e-mail addresses and phone numbers and learn how to send attached documents. Set up regular times to meet.
 3. Keep the assignment descriptions handy and make sure you are doing what is asked for.
 4. Clearly define job responsibilities for each member and then hold each other accountable and edit one another’s work.
 5. Communicate openly about problems you are having with the course or group members. Own your opinions—for example, don’t say “you’re not doing anything.” Instead, say, “I am having a difficult time seeing what you’re contributing to this project.”

- Because of importance of maintaining positive relations with our agencies, it is imperative that the groups work effectively together. Should a group member choose not to participate responsibly in your group, despite your best efforts to work with this person, you may elect to remove them from your group. The following policy will be used when there is a problem member.
 1. Any group member can bring a violation in question to the attention of all of the members of the group. After a discussion, the members vote on two issues:
 - Whether the action constitutes a violation;
 - The severity of the violation. Violations may be classified as either minor or major.
 2. The majority rules for both votes. In the case of a tie, the incident will be considered a violation.
 3. All types of violations must be documented in the form of a memorandum written to the instructor (written by the team leader unless he or she is the subject of the violation), detailing the violation in question, and the result of the vote. All group members should be copied on the memorandum, and the memorandum should be written no more than 48 hours after the vote has taken place.
 4. The following formula will be used to determine whether a member should be removed from the group:
 - 2 minor violations = 1 major violation
 - 2 major violations = group member is removed
 5. When determining the severity of the violation, use the following examples as a guide:
 - Minor violations—being 20 minutes late to a meeting; having to miss a meeting (but giving advance notice); forgetting to complete one or two aspects of a task
 - Major violations—missing a deadline; not showing up to an agency meeting in professional attire; not completing an entire task; repeatedly ignoring communication with other group members;
 6. If a group member receives 2 major violations, then he/she is automatically removed from the group.
 - The other group members will carry on as a team, adhering to the standards required in the syllabus and assignment descriptions. If the team leader is the group member removed, another student will be asked to fill that role.
 - The removed group member forfeits all remaining group points. The instructor will give the student lengthy and painful assignments to be graded P/F. The student must “pass” all of these alternate assignments in order to earn a final grade **NO higher than a D**. If you are removed from your group, you are not eligible for a final grade higher than a D. PR work requires a significant amount of group work, and being removed from a group indicates that you do not work well with others, which will be reflected in your final grade. (A grade of “C” indicates that you are average, and being removed from a group does not reflect average work. However, a grade of “D” does allow one to receive hours towards graduation.)
- Please keep me in the communication loop about problems you are having in your group. I am more than happy to discuss recommendations for student-to-student intervention. Hopefully most situations can be remedied without having to invoke violations.

□ Reading Assignments/Class Discussion

- It is essential to keep up with the reading assignments in order to participate and excel in this course.
- All assignments and readings are to be completed before arriving to class.
- All work to be handed in should be typed, unless otherwise indicated.

☐ Academic Expectations

- In keeping with the University's statement, by enrolling at UNCW, you acknowledge that "the UNCW learning experience is challenging and requires hard work. The University expects you to make academics your highest priority by dedicating your time and energy to training your mind and acquiring knowledge. Academic success in critical thinking and problem-solving prepares you for the changes and challenges you will encounter in the future. Our faculty and academic support resources are readily available as partners in this effort, but the primary responsibility for learning is yours."
(<http://www.uncw.edu/uc/student/expectations.htm>)

☐ Honor Policy

- The UNCW Academic Honor Code will be strictly observed and enforced in this class.
- For further information, please refer to the current edition of the Student Handbook and the Code of Student Life.

☐ Course Completion and Gateway Requirements

- Classes typically coded "COM Majors ONLY" may occasionally be opened to PCOM majors or all students. This may most commonly occur during Summer terms. Please be aware, however, that to become a full-status COM major, you MUST complete the gateway courses (COM 105 and COM 200) SUCCESSFULLY, i.e., with a grade of "B" or higher in each. If you do NOT successfully complete those two courses, you cannot earn full COM major status, even if you complete one or more COM classes apart from the gateway courses.

☐ Portfolio Artifacts

- One of the culminating experiences of a communication studies degree is the completion of COM 490: Discipline Capstone, a course that includes the preparation of a personal portfolio to organize and showcase your abilities. I encourage you to retain items from this class, whether produced independently or in groups, for inclusion as portfolio artifacts. Beyond the Discipline Capstone class, your portfolio may prove a valuable tool as you seek entry into a graduate program or employment in your area(s) of specialization.

☐ Conduct

- UNCW practices a zero-tolerance policy for violence and harassment of any kind. For emergencies contact UNCW CARE at 962-2273, Campus Police at 962-3184, or Wilmington Police at 911. For University or community resources visit <http://uncw.edu/wrc/crisis.htm>.

☐ Miscellaneous

- If you have a documented disability, please let me know how I can make the class more accessible for you.
- In accordance with University policy, alcohol, drugs, firearms, and/or nudity will not be permitted in the classroom.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This syllabus is a contract, binding you to the policies and procedures outlined here.• This syllabus is subject to reasonable change at the instructor's discretion. Changes to the syllabus and course schedule will be announced in class. Absence from class is NOT a valid excuse for not adhering to changes made. |
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