

PRLS 4305 Public Relations Cases and Campaigns—Syllabus Spring 2014

Instructor: Amy H. Pitchford, Ph.D. APR

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Course Location:	Thompson Hall 115	Email:	aamy@uca.edu
Course Meeting:	MW 3:00 - 4:15 p.m.		

Office Hours: MWF 10-11 a.m., T 12-3 p.m., W 1-3 p.m., Th 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- ***Develop a comprehensive public relations campaign proposal for an actual client using the Strategic Communications Planning Matrix.***
- Analyze public relations case studies using the **four stages of the public relations process:** research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Define public relations as a *strategic* function in terms of relationship management.
- Apply persuasive communication theories in the analysis of public opinion to effectively and ethically influence targeted publics' attitudes and behavior.
- Conduct secondary research and evaluate primary research alternatives as part of the campaign planning process.
- Synthesize secondary and primary research findings to write background information, situation analysis and core problem/opportunity statement.
- Create campaign goals and audience-specific objectives and messages based on research results and implications.
- Select appropriate mass media, digital media, and direct strategies and tactics to accomplish stated goals and objectives.
- Employ specific calendaring and budgeting tools including a Gantt chart and communications confirmation table to assist in the campaign implementation process.
- Choose appropriate evaluation methods to measure effectiveness in terms of campaign objectives.
- Deliver a professional campaign presentation to the client using Microsoft® PowerPoint.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Wilson, L.J., & Ogden, J.D. (2008). *Strategic Communications Planning: For Effective Public Relations and Marketing* (5th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Swann, P. (2010). *Cases in Public Relations Management*. New York: Routledge.

COURSE EVALUATION

Assignment	Points Possible	Points Earned
Case Facilitation/Analysis	50	
Case Participation (10 points each)	100	
Campaign Proposal (Point allocations vary by milestone)	425	
Mid-Term Briefing and Reflection	50	
Total Points	625	

A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=59% and below

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- **Case Facilitation/Analysis**
You will work individually or with an assigned partner to analyze a case study during the semester. You will prepare questions to facilitate an in-class discussion, including supporting theories and concepts related to the case. You are responsible for submitting an **individual typed analysis** of the case following the method prescribed by the instructor.
- **Case Participation**
Thoughtful participation in case discussions is a vital aspect of developing your understanding of public relations campaigns. Thus, the quality of your verbal contributions during each case discussion will be evaluated. **These points cannot be made up if you are absent on the day a case is discussed.**
- **Campaign Proposal**
The semester-long project in this course involves working with a team of your choice to develop a public relations plan for an actual client. This assignment will involve both a written report and an oral presentation. A separate packet will be provided to further explain this assignment.
- **Mid-Term Briefing and Reflection**
Around the midpoint of the semester, the instructor will solicit feedback from the client regarding their satisfaction with each team's participation and completion of a mandatory site visit. Additionally, you will complete an individual, in-class reflection exercise to consider the service-learning elements of the project experienced up that point. The format for the reflection exercise will be similar to an essay exam.

NOTE FROM THE INSTRUCTOR

I believe no one can *make* someone else learn. All I can do is create the kind of environment that is conducive to learning. Hence, it is my responsibility to come to class prepared and to present lectures and application activities that facilitate your learning. Because competence in public relations depends upon a strong foundation of knowledge and skills, I look forward to serving as both your coach and guide in further developing your understanding of the profession and practice of public relations.

As a student, you also have responsibilities. Assigned readings should be read *before* coming to class the day they are discussed. Written assignments should be ready to submit at the *beginning* of the class period in which they are due. Most importantly, you are responsible for your attitude toward the class and toward learning in general. Truly, you will get out of the course what you put into it.

Ways to Have an Outstanding Semester

Based on previous semesters, I have developed a list of a few issues that will ensure a positive working relationship between students and me. Here are a few of those items.

- My highest values in the classroom are mutual respect and open dialogue. Strive to show respect to your fellow students and to your professor. Each one of us contributes to an environment that is “safe” and conducive to learning. Show respect by being tactful and disagreeing in constructive ways. Monitor your body language to ensure it also shows respect for others.
- Show respect by coming to class prepared and on time. If you are running late and I have closed the classroom door, do NOT disturb the class by walking in late. Consider that class period an absence. Also, if work is not ready to submit in hard copy when it is asked for in class on a given day, that work is considered late and will be penalized accordingly. Work submitted via email, even before the class period in which it is due, will be penalized as a late assignment.
- Show respect by participating in class discussion. Monitor your participation to ensure you are neither dominating nor disengaging from dialogue.
- Show respect by “unplugging” from all outside distractions while in class. This means silencing cell phones and putting all portable electronic devices out of sight during class time. Laptops are permissible for taking notes on a case-by-case basis. Any abuse of this privilege will result in a laptop ban for the offending student.
- Show respect by being honest in your communication. I have more respect for a trustworthy student who earns a C than for a student who cheats to make an A. Remember your reputation is your most valuable asset.
- Show respect by contributing to group assignments in a meaningful way. Commit to doing your fair share of the workload and expect others to do the same. Learn to constructively confront those who are underperforming, and don’t be a martyr if you are doing more than your fair share due to a need to control the project.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ATTENDANCE/CLASS PARTICIPATION

You are expected to attend class regularly. A significant portion of your final grade is determined by in-class case discussions that cannot be made up if you are absent the day of the assignment. Moreover, due to the team-based nature of the campaign project, there is a five-point individual deduction taken off of the next submitted milestone for every class period a student misses leading up to the submission of that milestone. Thus, failure to attend class will naturally result in a reduction in your final grade.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135. Please make me aware of any learning differences, difficulties or other special challenges *in advance* of the relevant assignment(s) so that I may assist you.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

On a more personal note, it should go without saying that I do not tolerate cheating of any kind. *Plagiarism* is representing directly or indirectly someone else's work. It can occur in a written or an oral assignment and includes "borrowing" even a single idea from someone without revealing the source of the idea. Plagiarism also includes directly quoting someone and acting as if you have paraphrased the material—this is plagiarism even if you cite the source. If you have questions related to citing sources in a presentation or written assignment, check with me *before* handing in the assignment.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Any student in a Department of Communication class whose behavior regularly interferes with the instructor's ability to conduct the class and foster student learning, or who exhibits a behavior so outrageous as to severely impede the conduct of a class, may be dropped by the instructor after the instructor consults with the department chair. Prior warning will be provided to the student when possible, but under extraordinary circumstances such warning may not always be possible.

EVALUATIONS

Student evaluations of a course and its instructor are a crucial element in helping faculty improve their teaching and in demonstrating that students are, in fact, learning. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging onto myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PLAN

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

OTHER POLICIES

Become familiar with the policies described in the *Student Handbook*, including the sexual harassment policy and policies outlining other academic procedures.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: WO refers to Wilson & Ogden's *Strategic Communications Planning*.

PS refers to Patricia Swann's *Cases in Public Relations Management*.

Date(s)	Assignment(s)
January 13	Course Introduction
January 15	WO Chapter 1 "Trust and the Relationship-Building Approach to Communication" Campaign Proposal Assignment Overview
January 20	No Class - Holiday
January 22	PS Chapter 3 "The Case Method" Case Facilitation/Analysis Overview Example Case – "Break the Silence – Make the Call" (Media Relations)
January 27	WO Chapter 2 "Public Information and Persuasive Communication" Milestone 1 – Skills Assessment Report
January 29	PS "National Rankings Fever" (Media Relations)
February 3	WO Chapter 3 "Communication Research Methods"
February 5	PS "Communicating in the Face of Tragedy" (Media Relations)
February 10	WO Chapter 4 "Using Research for Effective Communications Planning" Milestone 2 – Preliminary Interview Report
February 12	PS "The '4Cs' of a Great Picture" (Media Relations)
February 17	WO Chapter 5 "Setting Goals and Objectives"
February 19	PS "Hidden Camera Captures Chicken Abuse" (Crisis Communication)
February 24	WO Chapter 6 "Key Publics and Message Design" Milestone 3 – Secondary Research Report
February 26	PS "Blogger Video and Internet Postings" (Crisis Communication)
March 3	Mid-Semester Individual Reflection Exercise
March 5	PS "Mashing the Low-Carbohydrate Craze" (Consumer Relations)
March 10 & 12	WO Chapter 7 "Designing Strategies and Tactics to Send Messages" Milestone 4 – Primary Research Plan
March 17	WO Chapter 8 "Calendar and Budgeting" WO Chapter 9 "Implementation and Communications Management"
March 19	Milestone 5 – Campaign Planning Report
March 24 & 26	No Class – Spring Break
March 31	WO Chapter 10 "Effective Communications Measurement and Evaluation"
April 2	PS "Kansas, as Big as You Think" (Consumer Relations)
April 7	PS "It's the Real Thing" (Community Relations)
April 9	PS "Night Train to Nashville" (Community Relations)
April 14	Milestone 6 – Campaign Tactics & Logistics Report
April 16	PS "Hallmark Writers on Tour" (Employee Relations)
April 21	WO Chapter 11 "Executive Summaries and Business Presentations" Milestone 7 – Proposed Evaluation Plan
April 23	PS "City Utility or Cash Cow?" (Ethics and the Public Interest)
April 25	Milestone 8 - Campaign Proposal Due
May 2	Milestone 9 - Formal Presentations, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (final exam schedule) Milestone 10 - Individual Log and Final Reflection Due at Noon