

Journ 61-315
Public Relations Techniques
Fall 2008

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Office Hours: 1 to 2 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday
By appointment on Friday

Please note: Assignments and other specifications listed below may change during the course of the semester. If a student is absent from class, it is that student's responsibility to determine what announcements he or she may have missed.

1. Course Description.

Study of skills and techniques essential to public relations practice. Focuses on solving problems through projects in writing and designing effective communication. Includes strategies and messages for print and electronic media. **Prerequisites:** A grade of "C" or better in Media Writing - 61-221, Editing - 61-224, Principles of Public Relations 61-211.

2. Course Objectives.

This course enables the student to obtain:

- 1) an understanding of the role of publicity in the public relations process; the ability to recognize the difference between publicity and public relations and marketing
- 2) a knowledge of techniques, methods and activities important in public relations practice
- 3) practical experiences in applying theory and using skills to help organizations solve problems and

4) an understanding of the social and organizational context in which projects are designed and implemented.

This course emphasizes pragmatic aspects of public relations practice and readings that foster sound decision-making. The student is expected to apply theory and principles he or she has learned in 61-211, other courses, and this course.

3. Readings:

Required: Becoming a Public Relations Writer Second Edition

Ronald D Smith

The AP Stylebook

Recommended: When Words Collide by Kessler and McDonald

Public Relations Tactics (monthly)

PR Week

These and other public relations trade publications are available in the Journalism Reading Room.

4. Academic Integrity:

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to a standard of academic integrity for all students. The system guidelines state: "Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for **the appropriate citation of sources**, and for respect of others' academic endeavors." (s. UWS 14,01, Wis. Adm. Code).

Students are subject to disciplinary action for academic misconduct, which is defined in s. UWS 14.03, Wis. Adm. Code. ***Students on the UW Oshkosh campus have been suspended from the University for academic misconduct.***

Students are encouraged to review the procedures related to violations of academic honesty as outlined in Chapter UWS 14, Wisconsin Administrative Code. The system guidelines and local procedures are printed in the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Student Discipline Code.

Specific questions regarding the provisions in Chapter UWS 14 (and institutional procedures approved to implement Chapter UWS 14) should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

Especially applicable to this class is the issue of copying information from a source without citing the source. This is called plagiarism, and will result in a failing grade.

5. Approach.

This course meets four hours per week. Approximately two hours per week will be used for lectures and discussion. Approximately two hours will be used for laboratory and project work. Students will carry out most assignments as individuals, but some team projects and in-class group work are also required.

Prior to each lab session, a student should have conducted research and written a draft of any copy necessary for the next assignment, plus prepared a dummy when appropriate. Only at this point should a student begin working on the final version, and this should be done during lab hours. There are two reasons:

1. Problems of compatibility. Problems with printing or transferring an e-mail document are not legitimate excuses for missing a deadline. The result will be a 0, which is worse than an F.

2. During the lab sessions, your professor will be available to answer questions and to preview your work. In addition, students often find it beneficial to call upon each other for critique and information.

Special Note: You should be aware that students have often had problems in the past in transferring files from one computer on this campus to one in our lab. In addition, software in the labs was upgraded over the summer so we are now using Microsoft Office 2008 and Indesign CS3. You might want to test ahead of time how this affects work you might do on your own computer at home.

6. Attendance.

Attendance is extremely important in both the lecture and laboratory sessions. Assignments may be required to be completed during the lab sessions without advance notice.

7. Grading.

Final grades will be based on:

Assignments – 540 points

Quizzes -- about 100 points

Extra Credit -- up to 24 points

Grades will be distributed on this basis:*

| | |
|----|---------------|
| A | 90 - 100% |
| AB | 88 - 89% |
| B | 80 - 87% |
| BC | 78 - 79% |
| C | 70 - 77% |
| CD | 68 - 69% |
| D | 60 - 67% |
| F | Less than 60% |

***Please note. Percentages will NOT be rounded up. To earn a BC, for example, you must earn at least 78% of the points. Total points of 77.999999% will not be sufficient.**

Assignments

Detailed information about assignments will be included in handouts given throughout the semester. These will also be available on the Journalism Server.

The following 7 assignments are required:

| | Point Value |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| #1. Radio Interview | 50 |
| #2. Annual Report | 100 |
| #4. Lecture applications | 40 |
| #5. Print publication | 75 |

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| #6. Writing Piece | 75 |
| #7. In Class assignment | 50 |
| #8. Final Project | <u>150</u> |
| | 540 |

Deadlines.

Deadlines for the various projects are indicated on the schedule below.

- **Projects will not be accepted after the deadline.**
- **No exceptions.**
- **Resulting grade will be a 0, which is worse than an F.**
- **Note:** Students most often miss deadlines because they assume they can print out assignments at the last minute. A problem with a computer or a printer is not a legitimate excuse for missing a deadline.
- Recommended: always print out an assignment at least one day before it is due.

IN GENERAL: Points will be subtracted for not following these guidelines.

- Always type assignments. Print out assignments on one side of a sheet of paper only.
- You will lose points for errors in grammar, spelling, fact, and style (for being careless).
- Read directions carefully. You must meet the specifications of each assignment to receive full credit. Specifications vary from assignment to assignment.
- Many of these assignments will require research.
 1. Do not count your textbook as a research source.
 2. Do not count notes you take in class as a research source.
 3. Do not count something you copy off my door as a research source.
 4. Do not use Web sites for more than one research source per assignment.
 5. A class handout given in class cannot be considered a research source.

6. Do not use Wikipedia as a research source, or any other Wiki site.
7. Your professor cannot be an interview source.
8. For help with correct citations, go to the Polk Library Web site. In the right hand column, under "Research Help," go to "Citing Sources." Then go to Assembling a List of Works Cited in Your Paper.

Quizzes

Quizzes will emphasize comprehension of the reading assignments, lectures and discussions.

Extra Credit

Students may also earn extra credit two ways.

Catching errors. You can earn up to 1 point per week, but no more than 1 point per week. To do so, follow these steps:

1. Find an error in a printed newspaper or magazine. This can be a typographical error, or an error in fact or calculation.
2. Clip the error to a piece of paper containing your name, the date and the current time. Indicate what the error is, and how it could be fixed.
3. Turn into my faculty mailbox at any time during the week.

Caveat: Only one student will be given credit for any error. That will be the student who turns in the error the earliest, hence the need for date and time.

Public relations and political campaigns. You may earn up to 10 points for a paper discussing your observations regarding how a political campaign has used public relations. A full description of this assignment can be found on the server.

8. About Using the Computer Lab.

SAVE EARLY AND OFTEN – SAVE EARLY AND OFTEN

1. The first thing you should do each day when beginning to work on your computer is close all applications. The more that are open, the slower your computer will run.

2. In general, avoid using Zip disks. If you are going to use a Zip disk, it seems to work better if you do not use one that you also use on a PC. You need a separate one for work on a Mac.
3. **Do not use lab time or lecture time to check on or respond to your e-mail, to surf the Internet, or to scan Facebook or MySpace. This is inappropriate and very rude. Any student caught doing so will automatically lose 10 points each time.**
4. If you are going to use the computer to take notes during lectures, you must print out those notes and turn them into me at the end of the class period.
5. Do not use the printer as a copy machine. If you need multiple copies of something, print one original, then make additional copies on the Xerox machine.
6. You may use the color printer **but only** to print your final copy. Do not use it until you are sure there are no errors. **Do not** use the color printer to print drafts. Abuse of this privilege will mean you can no longer use the color printer.
7. The Wasteland site on the Student Server is erased the 1st and 15th of each month.
8. **Do not use lab time to do assignments for other classes. If you find yourself with time on your hands, I will be happy to add more assignments.**
9. A word about computer programs: if you are going to use a specific program (such as PhotoShop, Illustrator, etc.), be sure you know how. I cannot answer questions about every program. Likewise, do not assume that I can fix a problem with transferring images via e-mail or among programs. Inability to get a file to print is not considered a legitimate excuse for being late with a project.

9. Schedule

| <u>DATES</u> | <u>TOPICS</u> | <u>READINGS/DEADLINES</u> |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Week #1. September 3 | <i>Introduction to Class</i> | |
| Week #2. September 8 | <i>Writing</i> <i>Interviewing</i> | Read: Chapters 1-2 |
| September 10 | <i>Research</i> | Read: Ch. 4, pages 72-80 |
| Week #3. September 15 | <i>Brochures</i> <i>Other Print media</i> | Read: Ch. 5, pages 103-107 Read: Ch. 11, pages 239-248 |
| September 17 | Lab. | Assignment #1 Due. |
| Week #4. September 22 | <i>Newsletters</i> <i>Magazines</i> | Read: Ch. 12, pages 258-267 |
| September 24 | Lab. | |
| Week #5. September 29 | <i>Annual Reports</i> <i>Other Corporate</i> <i>Tactics</i> | Read: Ch. 12, pages 268-273 Read: Ch. 10, pages 217-228 Quiz #1. |
| October 1 | Lab. | Assignment #4 Due. |
| Week #6. October 6 | <i>What is News?</i> <i>Media Relations</i> | Read: Ch. 5, pages 91-102 Read: Ch. 7, pages 152-157 |
| October 8 | Lab. | |
| Week #7. October 13 | <i>News Releases</i> | Read: Ch. 6 Read: Ch. 7, pages 157-168 |
| October 15 | Lab. | |
| Week #8. October 20 | <i>Other Media Tactics</i> | Read: Ch. 7, 168-179 |

Other Releases

Read: Ch. 8, pages 189-198
Quiz #2.

October 22

Lab.

Week #9.

October 27
October 29

During this week, your professor will be participating in the International Public Relations Conference in Detroit. Class periods should be considered lab time to finalize your annual reports.

Week #10.

November 3

Features.
Op-Ed Pieces

Read: Ch. 9
Read: Ch. 3
Read: Ch. 10, pages 228-235

November 5

Lab.

Assignment #2 Due.

Week #11.

November 10

News Conferences
Media Kits

Read: Ch. 16 and 17
Quiz #3.

November 12

Lab.

Week #12.

November 17

Speeches
PSAs

Read: Ch. 15, pages 323-337
Read: Ch. 14, pages 314-322

November 19

Lab.

Assignment #5 Due.

Week #13.

November 24

Assignment #6 completed in class.

November 26

No class -- Thanksgiving Holiday

Week #14.

December 1

Web Sites

Read: Ch. 11, pages 249-257.
Quiz #4

December 3

Work on presentations.

Week #15.

December 8

Work on presentations.

December 10

Final presentations.

Assignment #6 Due.

