

MCOM 2375 – Introduction to Public Relations
T/Th 9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.
Instructor: Anita Brown
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Office Hours: T/Th 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description: A survey of public relations, including the nature of communication, public opinion, persuasion, theories, principles, techniques, and media use. Throughout the semester you will learn about the field of public relations, the different tools & tactics used in PR, and the reasons behind why those tools & tactics are used.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles and concepts of public relations.
2. Develop competency in research and evaluation of information using methods appropriate to public relations.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and development of public relations as a profession, the functions assumed by practitioners in various types of organizations, and issues and trends in the field of public relations.
4. Identify and analyze emerging trends in public relations.
5. Develop an understanding of legal and ethical principles that exist in the field of public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism and be able to apply that understanding in their work.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and legal for public relations.

Course Requirements

1. Required Readings:

A. Introduction to Public Relations, Page & Parnell, 2nd edition, ISBN: 9781544392004

- i. Text must be this edition – older editions do not contain updated research and chapters are in a different order.

1. Required Programs/Software/Technology

A. Microsoft Word or comparable word processing software.

- i. You may use Google Docs or Pages but your assignment **MUST** be exported to a .DOC or .DOCX format before submission.
- ii. You **may not** utilize notepad or notes on your phone. If you submit a screenshot of your notepad on your phone or tablet, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

Evaluation and Grade Calculation -

Journals	20%
Career Research Paper	10%
Case Study Analysis Paper	10%
Public Relations Project	30%
Tests (2)	30%

Total	100%
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Percent	Letter Grade
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% and below	F

1. Journals (20%) **Student learning outcomes – 1, 3, 4, 5, 6**
 - a. Students will write journals that address and analyze different principles, concepts, historical contexts, industry trends, and legal and ethical concepts in public relations.
2. Career Research Paper (10%) **Student learning outcomes – 1, 2, 3, 4**
 - a. Students will conduct research about different careers in the public relation industry and write a paper that details what they have learned regarding different careers in public relations and what the job entails, the role that it plays in public relations and other business markets, job outlook, expected growth, and ethical/legal considerations.
3. Case Study Analysis Paper (10%) **Student learning outcomes – 1, 2, 3, 5, 6**
 - a. Students will utilize research to conduct a case study analysis utilizing a historical occurrence in public relations that examines the situation, the historical context surrounding the case, the ethical and legal implications of the case, and the principles, concepts, and role of public relations in the situation.
4. Public Relations Project (30%) **Student learning outcomes – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**
 - a. Students will complete an analysis project wherein the work with a real “client” to examine the public relations tactics utilized and the strengths/weaknesses of these tactics and provide insight on where the weaknesses might be improved based on the knowledge they have gained from the course. The project will consist of interviewing the client, researching and examining the client’s PR tactics, writing a project report on their findings, and giving a presentation over their final project.
5. Tests (30%) **Student learning outcomes – 1, 3, 4, 5, 6**
 - a. Students will complete two tests during the semester. Each will require that the student demonstrate an understanding of different principles, concepts, historical contexts, industry trends, and legal and ethical concepts in public relations.

Fall 2021 Covid-19 Information

Students are expected to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, digestive issues (e.g. nausea, diarrhea), or a higher than normal temperature should stay at home and are encouraged to use the [UT Tyler COVID-19 Information and Procedures \(Links to an external site.\)](#) website to review protocols, check symptoms, and report possible exposure. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

Class Policies and Expectations

1. Classroom Policies and Expectations

- A. Work hard - learning requires constant reading, researching, thinking, discussing, and working with your classmates and me. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to present new information and prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
- B. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
- C. Treat each other with respect and display common classroom courtesies.
 1. Given the nature and content of this course, there are times that we will discuss current events and politics. There is a strong possibility that you will disagree with something someone says at some point in the semester. You are responsible for your attitude and how you treat others. I will not tolerate name calling, fighting, students belittling each other for differing opinions, etc. I expect you to act like adults, show each other respect, and to challenge yourself and each other to learn/understand opinions you may not agree with. If you are not treating individuals with respect or are causing a distraction, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- D. Grading – The grading process begins with the assumption that the work is good, which earns a grade within the range of a “B.” To earn an A, you must show exceptional understanding of the material, utilizing additional sources, examples, and original thought. This means going beyond stating the obvious, the simple answer, or what Google says. Additionally, poor organization, not following assignment instructions, grammar/spelling, lack of depth and thought, failing to illustrate an understanding of the material, etc. will result in your grade being lowered.

- E. The use of cellphones, tablets, or other device use during class times is not allowed unless the need is specified by me (i.e. during an activity). You are not permitted to use cellphones for note taking, check social media, view/work on material for another course, or simply browse the internet during class times.
 - 1. I understand emergencies and the need to take a call or text. If this must happen, be discreet, do not disturb others, do not let it get in the way of your learning, and DO NOT abuse this.
- F. I use Canvas and email to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I expect you to check both daily and stay aware of what is coming up.
 - 1. It is highly recommended that you download the Canvas application and adjust your settings to allow for notifications.
- G. Communicate - If you have a problem with anything throughout the semester... getting an assignment in on time, needing to be absent from a class, getting your book, checking out equipment, or anything I'm doing as a professor... talk to me about it. I cannot help you or fix the problem if I am unaware of it.
- H. Hold me to the same standards and expectations that I hold you to.

2. Attendance Policy

- A. Attendance will be taken for each meeting. Students are expected to attend class during each scheduled meeting. If you miss a meeting, it is your responsibility to make up anything you may have missed outside of meeting times, such as completing in-class activities at home, getting any material that may have been handed out during class, and ensuring you are aware of anything that may have been assigned or discussed. Additionally, if you miss a class and want lecture notes, you are responsible for getting these from a classmate (with the exception of special accommodations set up through the university). I will not be recording lectures this semester.
- B. If you must miss an exam period, it is your responsibility to inform me that a make-up exam will be needed. No make-up exams will be allowed if the reason for missing does not fall within the exceptions below.
 - i. Exceptions to this include illness supported by a doctor's note, a school sponsored event that the student has given prior notice for, religious observances that the student has given prior notice for, a death in your family, or an emergency that can be documented. Additional exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with me.
- C. See the current UT Tyler catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second course meeting.

3. Assignment Policies

- A. Assignments do have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. It is your responsibility to utilize time outside of class in an effective manner so you can ensure that you submit each assignment before the due date and time.
 - a. For many assignments, not all, the submission folder will stay open for one week after the due date. Any assignments turned in after the due date will receive a point per day deduction. Specific point values that will be deducted each day can be found on the assignment overviews on Canvas. It is your responsibility to know when the assignment is due for full credit, when the assignment closes, and the number of points that will be deducted each day for late submissions. Assignments will not be accepted after this final date.
- B. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
- C. Merely completing all assignments does not guarantee that you will pass the course. You must put forth effort and show an understanding of the material to earn a satisfactory grade.
- D. Spelling, grammar, and neatness count and you will lose points on assignments if your submissions are not edited.
- E. You are required to utilize APA format for any assignment that requires the utilization of outside sources.
- F. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed, formatted to be a .DOC or .DOCX (Pages, Google Drive, and other online word processors must be exported to this specific format), and submitted via Canvas.
- G. Assignments will be discussed in class, students will be given a course schedule and an assignment list, Canvas includes a syllabus function that outlines upcoming due dates, due dates can be seen listed on each assignment under the assignment tab in Canvas, and each due date will be listed in the course modules. There are SEVERAL ways to determine what is coming up due in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of what is coming up due and to stay on top of your assignments.
- H. Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. A student who is caught doing either will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. If a student is caught a second time, they will automatically fail the course.
 - a. Plagiarism/cheating includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted in my classes or other professor's classes, as well as video and audio recordings. I expect you to submit work created specifically for this class during this semester.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assign in Class	Due today
T 8/24	<u>Course Introduction</u>	<u>Read:</u> Page & Parnell Preface & Ch. 1 <u>Journal #1:</u> Why Public Relations? (due on Tuesday, 8/30)	
Th 8/26	<u>Lecture:</u> Strategic Public Relations		
T 8/30	<u>Lecture:</u> Strategic Public Relations		<u>Journal #1:</u> Why Public Relations?
Th 9/2	<u>Lecture:</u> The History of Modern Public Relations	<u>Read:</u> Page & Parnell Ch. 2, 3, & 4	
T 9/7	<u>Lecture:</u> Ethics and Law in Public Relations	<u>Journal #2:</u> Public Relations and the “Ethical Advocate” (due on Tuesday, 9/14)	
Th 9/9	<u>Lecture:</u> Foundations of Public Relations: Research and Theory		
T 9/14	<u>Lecture:</u> Media Relations in a Digital World	<u>Read:</u> Page & Parnell Ch. 7 <u>Journal #3:</u> Public Opinion (due on Tuesday, 9/21)	<u>Journal #2:</u> Public Relations and the “Ethical Advocate”
Th 9/16	<u>Lecture:</u> Media Relations in a Digital World	<u>Paper #1:</u> Career Research Paper (due Tuesday, 10/12)	
T 9/21	<u>Lecture:</u> Social Media and Emerging Technologies	<u>Read:</u> Page & Parnell Ch. 8 <u>Journal #4:</u> Public Relations on Social Media (due 9/28)	<u>Journal #3:</u> Public Opinion
Th 9/23	<u>Lecture:</u> Social Media and Emerging Technologies		
T 9/28	<u>Lecture:</u> Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Relations	<u>Read:</u> Page & Parnell Ch. 9 <u>Journal #5:</u> Corporate Social Responsibility (due on Tuesday, 10/5)	<u>Journal #4:</u> Public Relations on Social Media
Th 9/30	<u>Lecture:</u> Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Relations	<u>Client selection for project</u> (to-do by start of class on Thursday, 10/7)	

T 10/5	Discuss: Semester project	Final Project: Project report and presentation material (due Tuesday, 11/30) Project Presentations: Tuesday, 11/30 & Thursday, 12/2 Project Workday on Thursday, 10/7	Journal #5: Corporate Social Responsibility
Th 10/7	Project Workday: Planning & outlining		Client selection for project
T 10/12	Lecture: Employee Relations, Corporate Culture, & Social Responsibility	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 10 Journal #6: Current Employer's PR practices (due on Tuesday, 10/19)	Paper #1: Career Research Paper
Th 10/14	Lecture: Employee Relations, Corporate Culture, & Social Responsibility	Paper #2: Case Study Analysis (due Tuesday, November 16) Major: Test #1 (opens on Tuesday, 10/19 and is due by Tuesday, 10/26)	
T 10/19	Lecture: Corporate Communication & Reputation Management Major: Test #1 open and is due on Tuesday, 10/26	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 11	Journal #6: Current Employer's PR practices
Th 10/21	Lecture: Corporate Communication & Reputation Management		
T 10/26	Lecture: Issues Management and Crisis Communication	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 12 Journal #7: Public Relations During a Pandemic (due on Tuesday, 11/2)	Major: Test #1
Th 10/28	Lecture: Issues Management and Crisis Communication		
T 11/2	Lecture: Sports, Tourism, and Entertainment	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 13	Journal #7: Public Relations During a Pandemic
Th 11/4	Lecture: Sports, Tourism, and Entertainment		
T 11/9	Lecture: Nonprofit, Health, Education, and Grassroots Organizations	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 14 Journal #8: How has PR influenced you? (due on Tuesday, 11/16)	

Th 11/11	Lecture: Nonprofit, Health, Education, and Grassroots Organizations		
T 11/16	Lecture: Public Affairs, Government Relations, and Political Communications	Read: Page & Parnell Ch. 15 Journal #9: Public Relations in Government & Politics (due on Tuesday, 11/30)	Journal #8: How has PR influenced you? Paper #2: Case Study Analysis
Th 11/18	Lecture: Public Affairs, Government Relations, and Political Communications		
Monday 11/22 – Friday 11/26 Thanksgiving Break			
T 11/30	Project Presentations	Journal #10: Final Public Relations Reflection (due on Thursday, 12/9) Major: Test #2 (opens on Thursday, 12/2 and is due by Thursday, 12/9)	Journal #9: Public Relations in Government & Politics Final Project: Project report and presentation material
Th 12/2	Project Presentations Major: Test #2 is open and is due on Thursday, 12/9		
T 12/7 & Th 12/9	Finals Week Project Presentations Meeting day dependent on publication of final exam schedule		Due on Friday, 12/10: Journal #10: Final Public Relations Reflection Major: Test #2