

MCOM 2375
Introduction to Public Relations

Instructor: Chase Ragland
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Office: UC 3407
Office Hours:
Monday: 3-5pm; Wednesday: 3:30-5pm

*The best way to contact me is by email. If you don't receive a reply within 24-48 hours, either resend the email or call me.

REQUIRED READING:

Wilcox, D.L., Cameron, G.T., Reber, B.H., & Shin, J. (2013). *THINK Public Relations*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Select readings assigned in class.

SUGGESTED READINGS:

The Associated Press Stylebook & Manual

REQUIRED SUPPLIES:

1. USB/Flash Drive
2. Email address that you check regularly
3. Access to a computer with Internet access (you have this through any of the campus computer labs)
4. A folder
5. Motivation, energy, excitement, curiosity, and hard work

COURSE DESCRIPTION: "Survey of public relations, including the nature of communication, public opinion, persuasion, theories, principles, techniques, and media use."

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: By the end of this course:

1. Students will be able to conduct research and evaluate information using methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism professions.
2. Students will learn the fundamental principles and concepts of public relations through readings, class discussion, examination, written assignments and projects.
3. Students will be introduced to 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. Students will analyze emerging trends in public relations through readings and written assignments.

5. Students will develop an understanding of the basic PR process when developing a project.

EXPECTATIONS: We will approach courses with certain expectations. The following are what I will expect of you during the course of this semester:

1. *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 where you can contribute your own special knowledge.
2. *Participate* – you have to be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
3. *Be there* – attendance is vital, and is a part of my expectations and your evaluation. You cannot succeed in this course if you are not here. I treat the class like a business – with sick leave.
 - a. **Four** absences are allowed – this includes illness, university-sponsored activities, etc. Every absence after the fourth will result in your participation grade being lowered by **5 points** (that is 5 points per absence starting with the fifth).
 - b. **Note regarding student absence due to religious observance:** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.
 - c. **Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:** If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.
4. *Have access to technology* – I will use Blackboard to communicate, post assignments, present some feedback, and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I will also post any extra readings on Blackboard. You need to check Blackboard regularly.
5. *Be responsible* – practice academic integrity and accept responsibility for your actions and choices.
 - a. Academic misconduct – includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others' work (including test and paper 'banks'), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor. Academic Honesty Policy: Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker's or writer's

indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

6. *Be respectful* – treat others with respect and courtesy. Turn off all electronic devices including cell phones and MP3 players. Allowing a cell phone or other device to ring during class is rude and disrupts class. No text messaging or checking the time on your cell phone during class. Keep these devices in your back pack during class. Do not use computers during class for reading/writing e-mail, surfing the Web, playing games, working on assignments (for any class), or writing letters. You may use a laptop for taking notes. If you use your laptop for any other purpose, I will require you to immediately close the computer.

RESOURCES: You need to take advantage of the different resources available to you at UT Tyler:

Writing Center: Take advantage of writing help. The U-T Tyler Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: BUS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

Services for Students with Disabilities: In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns, please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Grade Replacement: Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the

Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date).
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade).
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment.
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid.

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy: Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Schedule of Classes for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

Social Security and FERPA Statement: It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; **grades will not be transmitted electronically.**

Emergency Exits and Evacuation: Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Students Rights and Responsibilities: To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/StudentRightsandResponsibilities.html>.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Exams
- B. Theory Presentation
- C. Journals
- D. Cases Presentation/Paper
- E. Discussion Questions
- F. Project
- G. Participation

GRADING POLICIES:

A. Assignment Policy:

1. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, workbook and textbook reading assignments.
2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
3. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. This does not mean that merely completing all assignments guarantees the student will pass the course.
4. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class.
5. ALL PAPERS MUST BE TYPED OR WORD-PROCESSED USING THE FORMAT REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. (also: 1" margins, 12pt Times-New Roman Font, double-spaced, APA citations.)
6. SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND NEATNESS COUNT!
7. ALWAYS ATTACH EARLIER VERSIONS TO REWRITES.
8. Multiple pages must be stapled or paper clipped together. It is your responsibility to see this is accomplished.
9. NOTE: I am more than happy to review papers BEFORE they are turned in. To get my

review, you must send me the paper 48 hours or more before the assignment is due.

B. *Late Assignments*: Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified.

C. *Incomplete Grades*: Incompletes are given only in cases of severe illness, emergencies, or other significant or catastrophic events or circumstances.

Grades:

Theory Presentation	100
Cases Presentation	50
Cases Paper	50
Journals (5)	100
Participation	100
Project	100
Exams (2)	200
TOTAL	700

F = Below 420

D = 420-490

C = 491-560

B = 561-630

A = 631-700

For most assignments, my grading rubrics will be posted on Blackboard prior to the assignment. To get full points, the assignment is expected to be exceptional and practically perfect. I grade your work with the following assumptions:

- A. Exceptional work; thoughtful, complete mastery of material and performance
- B. Demonstrate thoughtful, complete mastery of material and better than normal performance
- C. Demonstrate fundamental mastery of material and acceptable/normal performance
- D. Demonstrate minimal mastery of material and below average performance.
- F. Inability to successfully deal with course material, and inadequate performance.