

## **PR Management and Problems**

Department of Strategic Communication

STRC 4859-001, Spring 2016

MWF: 11 am – 11:50 am

Tuttleman Hall, Room 309

Mandatory Prerequisites: STRC 2496, 2551, 2552, 3543 and 3596  
(3596 can be taken concurrently with 4859)

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**Required Text: *Developing the Public Relations Campaign: A Team-Based Approach* by Randy Bobbit & Ruth Sullivan, **Third Edition**. Published by Pearson Education Inc. Bringing text to each class is required.**

Also Required: *The Philadelphia Inquirer* or other mainstream print or electronic media outlet, every day. **Associated Press Stylebook** (you should have received an email to activate your free access to the online account. If you didn't receive one yet, let me know). Additional readings as assigned.

Strongly Recommended: Other news and business publications (*Time*, *Newsweek*, *BusinessWeek*, *Wall Street Journal*, *NY Times*, etc.), local and network TV news, KYW Newsradio, various new websites, a dictionary, thesaurus and grammar aide.

**Course Overview:** This is the final course in the public relations sequence. It will enable you to put into practice all of the theoretical knowledge, research skills, interpersonal and group skills, writing skills, and creative problem solving abilities you have developed throughout your public relations studies. This course will help you approach public relations strategically so you will be able to apply public relations techniques and theories to the creation, execution and management of public relations campaigns. This is a challenging and heavily team-oriented course, but a valuable and realistic one in terms of preparing you for the workplace with experience in the practical skills of campaign design and management.

### **Objectives:**

1. To analyze public relations situations and understand the process of PR planning.
2. To examine and apply appropriate theories of persuasion necessary to effective PR campaigns.
3. To examine and apply appropriate research techniques necessary to effective PR campaigns.

4. To put theory into practice by planning a public relations campaign to address a client problem or opportunity.
5. To gain experience in the practice of public relations by designing and implementing a public relations campaign including developing budgets and schedules.
6. To work as a team including delegating responsibilities, meeting deadlines, coordinating activities, and experiencing group dynamics.
7. To create and maintain effective relationships with clients.
8. To continue development of a sense of professionalism with ethicality in the practice of public relations.

**Workload and Explanation of Assignments** (subject to revision):

Assignments consist of both individual and group projects. Individual-level work includes in-class assignments and tests/quizzes, trend reviews, short essays, etc. Group work is a PR campaign planning project for a real client.

**Assignments: Trend Reviews**

The purpose of the trend reviews is to help you gain a better understanding of issues management and strategic planning. The basic content of each trend review is a critical analysis of 6-8 (total) significant local, national or international news stories during the semester that will have an effect on an organization in your area of interest/industry. Once you have chosen an organization or industry to follow, all trend reviews will be on that organization or industry for the duration of the semester.

Trend reviews must include a summary paragraph(s) of major issues and trends and the implications for public relations (see Blackboard for sample). There is no assigned minimum length. However, they should be as comprehensive as possible, as this will serve as a measure of your analytical thinking and skills. Students should keep a file of trend reviews. You may want to keep a copy of the story you read as the basis for the trend review, but **DO NOT** include it when you turn in your assignment. Sources **must be** from a mainstream print, broadcast or electronic media outlet such as the *NY Times*, *CNN*, trade publications, etc., not the blogosphere or Twitterverse.

Written assignments will be graded on content, creativity, critical thinking, syntax, grammar, spelling and punctuation. **I do not tolerate typographical errors**, therefore, each spelling mistake is an automatic two-point deduction. Each punctuation error is a one point deduction. Each error in grammar is a three-point deduction. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced and submitted on the specified due date. **No work will be accepted late.** Computer problems are not acceptable excuses. If extenuating circumstances will prevent you from completing an assignment on time, please discuss it with me first. Finally, please staple all multiple-page assignments before handing them in.

**Final Project:**

The final team project will be due and presented in class at the end of the semester during Final exams week – due date: Tues., May 3, 10:30 am. **This is a hard deadline, meaning no**

**extensions or exceptions.** You will work as a virtual PR agency in teams. By the second week of class, each team is required to identify a client (for-profit business, non-profit organization or government agency). You will analyze on-going trends in that industry and prepare a detailed communications plan to address a problem or opportunity your client is facing. Each plan will have 12 required elements:

1. **Executive Summary:** A one-page summary of the entire plan designed for members of management who are not directly involved in the public relations decision-making process.
2. **Background:** To include information about the client (obtained via research, including on-line research, or directly from a representative of the organization). This will include a discussion of how the existing PR operation (if there is one) fits into the organization, size and structure of the department, its duties, etc.
3. **Situation/Competitive Analysis:** An overview of the business/cultural/social environment in which your client's problem or opportunity exists; to include internal and external details that form a basis and focus for the plan.
4. **Research:** To include a detailed discussion of what you need to know to develop the plan (what you learned that serves as the rationale for everything that follows) and how you obtained the information (primary & secondary research). This section should show at what point or points in the plan the research was carried out, or if additional research will be needed throughout the campaign.
5. **Audiences:** List all the relevant target audiences in the plan.
6. **Business Goal:** The target you hope to reach either as a result of a specific crisis or situation, or on an on-going basis, depending on the client's situation.
7. **Communications Objectives:** Specific and measurable targets for each audience that support the goal; must detail how they will be measured. Objectives should follow the SMART model: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.
8. **Strategy:** To discuss the overall planning/strategic thinking for the development of an effective plan for each audience. They should support the objectives and overall goal(s) of the organization.
9. **Tactics:** To include a complete discussion of tactics for each audience, not a generic list of ideas. Representative samples of tactics (ex – news releases, PSAs, flyers, website page, social media initiatives, etc.) are required in an appendix.
10. **Evaluation:** This section must *specifically* show how each tactic will be evaluated for every target audience, to measure the success of the plan.
11. **Budget:** To include both a line item and overall/total budget for the campaign.
12. **Timeline:** To include a *detailed* calendar illustrating what happens when during the campaign, including planning steps. It can be either a chronological calendar or a Gantt chart.

*Team memos:* Your team will need to meet at least once a week, sometimes more depending on tasks, deadlines, etc. At each meeting, the team should designate a secretary who will note attendance, keep track of decisions made, tasks assigned, deadlines set, and major problems or questions facing the group. I should receive at least one memo from each group each week, preferably via e-mail message copied to all group members.

I'll save these – and you should too – for calculating your individual performance and your team's grades. Over the length of the semester, each team should meet with me periodically for regular status reports/updates/discussions. When possible, I will give you class time to meet in your teams. I will serve as advisor and coach for all teams.

Each team member will also be required to grade their fellow team members using a Group Members Critique form I'll supply. These evaluations will be kept strictly confidential, and will contribute to your individual grade for the Final Project. Finally, when the project is submitted for grading, you **must** include two items: 1) the critique forms, and, 2) a list of who was responsible for what portion(s) of the project. Without these, I cannot assign individual grades.

**Grading:** All Assignments, Tests, Final Project and Participation are 100 points each.

Participation: 15%

Tests/Quizzes (2): 10%

Assignments: 25%

Final Project: 50%

*All of your grades will be posted on Blackboard. It is important you frequently check your grades.*

**Grade Levels:**

A: 94-100 A-:90-93

B+: 87-89 B: 84-86 B-:80-83

C+: 77-79 C: 74-76 C-: 70-73

D+: 67-69 D: 64-66 D-: 60-63

F: 59 and below.

**Note: No Class, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, Feb. 29-Mar. 6 (Spring Break)**

C grade: The assignment merely fulfills the requirements. Specifically, for a grade of C, the work will:

- Conform to the type of assignment and tasks assigned
- Be ready on time, at the beginning of class
- Meet the objectives of the assignment
- Include all special elements of the assignment (e.g., outline, memos, etc.)
- Demonstrate reasonable directness, competence, and public relations judgment
- Be free of serious grammatical, punctuation, syntax, or word usage errors
- Cite all words or ideas drawn from other sources

B grade: The terms of the assignment have been fulfilled thoroughly and thoughtfully, with some evidence of originality and creativity. Specifically, for a grade of B, the work is good and will include all the qualities of C-level work, plus:

- Demonstrate originality and depth of thought
- Include thorough and exhaustive research
- Display clear organization and professional presentation
- Incorporate clear, concise evaluation criteria
- Demonstrate skillful presentation
- Indicate efficient use of resources

A grade: The assignment both fulfills the terms of the assignment and shows evidence of original, creative, analytical, and interesting thought. Specifically, a grade of A will include all the qualities of B-level and C-level work, plus:

- Constitute a true contribution to the knowledge or beliefs of the reader or audience
- Sustain positive interest, feeling and/or commitment in the reader or audience
- Demonstrate vividness through the use of language
- Demonstrate fluency and polish that strengthens the impact of the message
- Provide a genuine service to the client or recipient
- Be of professional-level written or oral presentation quality

Below average work (grade D or F) has major deficiencies, and does not meet upper-division level requirements. Work that fails to fulfill the requirements of the assignment will receive a D. Specifically, severe writing problems, poor research and data-gathering, and/or poor strategy would necessitate heavy reworking to be acceptable. Work that does not approximate the terms of the assignment will receive an F. Specifically, F work is unusable because it does not address what was asked; writing style, organization, research, and/or strategy seriously misses the mark.

### **Policies:**

Most of you are here to learn how to be public relations professionals and to work in this field once you've graduated. I will treat you as a professional and expect the same treatment from you and to each other. The policies below are based on policies you'll find in the real world.

1. **Punctuality.** Lateness is a disruption, so be on time. Being punctual is a courtesy to me and your fellow students. It's also professional. I will close the door approximately five minutes after the scheduled start time. After I close the door, the class begins. If you're outside the door, you miss the class. Cell phones are disruptive. Please turn them off before entering class. If they ring during class, I answer them. If you eat or drink in class, please clean up after yourself. No leaving class early unless you have discussed it with me previously.

2. Attendance. In this course, learning is enhanced significantly when students attend class regularly and prepare for and participate in class discussions. To encourage such activities, a student's final grade will be influenced by their attendance and class participation.

Attendance counts towards your Participation grade. You will be asked to sign in at each class. The only valid excuse for missing class is an illness, family emergency or religious holiday. All missed classes require documentation, e.g., a doctor's note. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to see that you get copies of any materials or assignments and their deadlines. Multiple absences from class are not acceptable and will affect your grade.

Tardiness is unprofessional. Being late will negatively impact your participation grade. If you are late, it is your responsibility to enter the classroom in an appropriate manner and time so as to not exacerbate the awkwardness of the situation and detract from the efforts of others.

3. Participation. Your participation in class and in group work is extremely important to the learning process and your success. I strongly encourage in-class discussions and exchanges of points of view. Please raise your hand to contribute something or ask a question, but most of all, communicators must communicate, so participate!

4. Inattentiveness. As part of class participation, please pay attention. Believe it or not, I will notice if you're reading a newspaper, filling out your day planner, doing another class' work, finishing a crossword puzzle, or making out with your neighbor in the back of the room during class time. And although I may not say anything in class, that doesn't mean I won't remember it when it comes time to figure out – and lower - your participation grade.

You are NOT permitted to text message or receive calls during class unless you receive prior approval from the instructor.

You are NOT permitted to use a laptop in class unless you received prior approval from the instructor.

5. Deadlines. Public Relations is a deadline-intensive field. Therefore, **no work will be accepted late**. All assignments must be completed and turned in on the required date at the beginning of class. If you email me an assignment before or in lieu of being in class, *I must receive it before 11 am the day it is due*. At 11:01 am, it will be considered late and you get a zero. If you know ahead of time that you are going to miss a class, turn in your assignment early. Emailing me a link to a Google Doc is not acceptable—download, save and send it.

6. Tests/Quizzes. Tests/quizzes and other in-class activities cannot be made up. If you miss a test/quiz, you lose those points. If you feel that a test/quiz or other assignment has been graded in error, please discuss the matter with me as soon as possible. Tests and quizzes carry equal weight towards your final grade.

7. Format. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, 12 point type (minimum). Handwritten work will not be accepted. **Computer problems are not acceptable excuses**. If I can't read your assignment due to poor legibility, I will hand it back to you.

8. Extra credit. There is no extra credit. I do not grade on a curve.

9. Incompletes. I do not give incompletes, except for serious extenuating circumstances (ex. – hospital stay).

10. Blackboard. I will post all assignments on Blackboard as soon as possible after class. There may also be additional messages or instructions from time to time between classes, so

please **make sure to check Blackboard on a regular basis**. I will also post your grades on Blackboard in a timely manner so you can see how you're doing throughout the semester. Do not wait until the last week of the semester to ask me how you can get a passing grade if you have failed every assignment up to that point! If you wish to discuss a specific assignment or your individual performance in class, please make an appointment.

11. Honesty and professional ethics are vital to your success. Cheating and plagiarism on any examination or assignment will result in automatic failure of the course and recommendation to the University Disciplinary Committee for further disciplinary action. All the pleading, begging and crying in the world will not help you. You cheat or plagiarize, you fail. And please note: if you can find it on the Internet, so can I.

12. Students with Disabilities. It is Temple University's policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities under the American Disabilities Act (ADA). At the beginning of each semester, any student with a disability should inform the course instructor if instructional accommodations or academic adjustments will be needed. For more information about the ADA and academic accommodations or adjustments, contact the Office of Disability Resources and Services (<http://www.temple.edu/disability>; 215-204-1280; [hellodrs@astro.temple.edu](mailto:hellodrs@astro.temple.edu)).

13. Academic Rights. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facts of academic freedom. The University has adopted a policy on student and faculty academic rights and responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: [http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_no=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02)

14. Plagiarism: Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism and academic cheating are, therefore, prohibited. Essential to intellectual growth is the development of independent thought and a respect for the thoughts of others. The prohibition against plagiarism and cheating is intended to foster this independence and respect.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor, another person's ideas, another person's words, and another person's assistance. Normally, all work done for courses -- papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations -- is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work. Any assistance must be reported to the instructor. If the work has entailed consulting other resources -- journals, books, or other media -- these resources must be cited in a manner appropriate to the course. It is the instructor's responsibility to indicate the appropriate manner of citation. Everything used from other sources -- suggestions for organization of ideas, ideas themselves, or actual language -- must be cited. Failure to cite borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Undocumented use of materials from the World Wide Web is plagiarism.

Academic cheating is, generally, the thwarting or breaking of the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of the individual courses. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's approval, work in one course which was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or actually doing the work of another person. The penalty for academic dishonesty can vary from receiving a reprimand and a failing grade for a particular assignment, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or expulsion from the University. The penalty varies with the nature of the offense, the individual instructor, the department, and the school or college. (Source/further details: Temple Undergraduate

Bulletin 2007-2008)

[http://www.temple.edu/bulletin/Responsibilities\\_rights/responsibilities/responsibilities.shtm](http://www.temple.edu/bulletin/Responsibilities_rights/responsibilities/responsibilities.shtm)

I reserve the right to refer any cases of suspected plagiarism or cheating to the University Disciplinary Committee.

15. Civil Behavior in Class. I expect students to behave civilly toward me and guest lecturers, as well as other students. If one-on-one conversations between a disruptive student and me are not fruitful, I will turn the matter over to the University Disciplinary Committee and/or other judicial bodies. In recent years many college and university professors, administrators, and mental health professionals report a growing number of students on campus who become disruptive to the educational mission of the institution. The disruptive student is one who persistently makes inordinate demands for time and attention from faculty and staff, habitually interferes with the learning environment by disruptive verbal or behavioral expressions, verbally threatens or abuses college personnel, willfully damages college property, misuses drugs or alcohol on college premises, or physically threatens or assaults others. The result is the disruption of academic, administrative, social, or recreational activities on campus.

16. School of Media and Communications Grievance/Grade Appeal Policy. STRC 4859 follows the School of Media and Communication grievance policy which can be found on the SMC website.

A grade appeal may only be pursued after the completion of the semester in which the alleged improper, unfair, or arbitrary academic action took place.

17. Course & Teaching Evaluations. Temple University is committed to high quality instruction in graduate, undergraduate and professional programs. Student feedback regarding instruction is an integral part of assuring quality in the University's educational programs. Student evaluations of faculty occur toward the end of semester. This is your opportunity to voice your opinion regarding my effectiveness and the course overall. Also, this process allows you to assist us as we strive to constantly improve upon efforts and make this a better experience for those students who follow you. For more information about student evaluations of courses and teaching, please refer to Policy #02.78.14 which can be found on the University's Policy & Procedures website at <http://policies.temple.edu>.

18. University Writing Center for Students. The University Writing Center provides services to students across the University. These services include tutoring, technology, a computer classroom, a resource library, workshops, and seminars. Many of these services, including tutoring, are accessible online through the Center's Website at <http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/>. All services are free-of-charge to you. Tutoring services are offered on a drop-in basis or by appointment. After reviewing some of your writing efforts, I may recommend some of you take advantage of this center and this service.

The instructor DOES NOT consent to his or her lecture, class discussions, etc., being recorded by students for later distribution through such channels as YouTube, email, etc.

*By accepting this syllabus, you agree to abide by these policies as stated.*



