HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY.

THE LAWRENCE HERBERT SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

Department of Journalism, Media Studies and Public Relations

PR 106-B: PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLS

Fall 2014 / CRN 93302
Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30-5:55 p.m.
Lawrence Herbert School of Communication, Room 122A

PROF. JEFF MOROSOFF

Office / Phone: Lawrence Herbert School of Communication, Room 119 / 516.463.5248
Office hours: Mondays, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30 p.m.;
 Thursdays, 2:30-4:00; please make an appointment
email: jeffrey.morosoff@hofstra.edu

Prerequisite: PR 100

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This is a practical course in the introduction to and the use of the digital and web-based tools for the public relations practitioner. The course will help to ensure that PR students are exposed to the programs and skills they will need to succeed professionally, because public relations has evolved from a traditional, journalism-based practice to a complex profession requiring proficiencies in integrated marketing communications and many of the digital (photography, VNRs, video and audio production, etc.) and Internet-based (social media, blogs, computer graphics, desktop publishing, video, web sites, etc.) tools employed. Students will review current programs and platforms, and share information and offer team instruction regarding their use as they related to the public relations field.

OBJECTIVES:
Students in the course will…

- become familiar with digital and online methods for communicating messages, exposing them to a wider variety of tools available for use in public relations.

- be introduced to the use of digital still photography and videography and the use of these and other media in moving messages to audiences through the Internet.

- learn how to use computer software for writing and editing e-publications; basic use of content management systems; how to record and edit audio, video and digital images; and how to integrate social media platforms within a public relations campaign.

- learn the technical aspects of public relations tools in each class and apply them to assigned projects.

- examine the profession's relationship to the traditional and new media outlets and how they interface with community relations, media relations, investor relations, and employee relations; the different approaches to each, and the importance of effectively targeting an audience through appropriate medium.

- reference and examine current, real-world situations and how using these PR tools plays a role in opinions, actions and outcomes.

- emphasize the importance of good writing for communicating messages effectively.

- be assigned outside research, application of classroom knowledge for practical use, and independent and group projects.

GOALS:

- effective instruction in public relations tools and the emphasis of work skills

- development of presentation skills fundamental to relating campaigns and PR outcomes to colleagues and clients

- recognition that the convergence of print, broadcast and on-line communications greatly impacts good PR practices, and that superior public relations skills are required to move messages through the media effectively

- a stimulating classroom experience that pays close attention to evolving media, with opportunities for moving messages and advancing the public relations profession.

- development and completion of a course portfolio to demonstrate the students' command and usage of the learned tools to be submitted at the conclusion of the semester

REQUIRED READING: Articles, blogs, and web sites will be assigned for analysis and review throughout the semester.

You are **also required** to subscribe to and comment on my weekly blog "Public Relations Nation" at **http://jmorosoff.wordpress.com** (published every Sunday morning, comments due the following Friday). This counts for five (5) points of your final grade.

PROGRAMS AND EQUIPMENT: You must have a means to shoot video and still photography (if necessary, some equipment may be signed out from the school's equipment room). Additional platforms may be needed for audio and video production and storage.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

OVERVIEW: Student projects will be developed around a single imaginary non-profit client at the start of the semester. You will create a series of materials during the course including social media sites; a blog; photo releases; public service announcements for television and radio; and printed materials including a newsletter, poster and brochure. Instruction will be given to use various platforms, programs and online tools in the production of these materials.

PARTICIPATION: This class involves sharing knowledge, information and instruction. Your attitude, participation, willingness to work as a team member and a demonstrated understanding of the subject will be included in your grade. Extra help is always available and meetings regarding your progress are welcome**.**

ATTENDANCE: You are expected to attend and be on time for every class. More than two unexcused absences or excessive lateness (more than three) will result in points deducted from your grade (one point for each excessive absence, one half point for each excessive lateness) for the semester. Absences or lateness are excused only when I'm notified <u>in advance of class</u>.

PRSSA: You are urged to attend meetings and join the Hofstra Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). The organization will be staging a networking dinner on campus on Wednesday, November 19, 2014. You are required to attend this and at least one other professional conference or networking event (see next item).

PRSSA, PRSA, PRPLI AND RELATED EVENTS: Professional development programs are held by the PRSSA twice a month during common hours, and are also staged by PRSA's New York City Chapter, Public Relations Professionals of Long Island, and other related organizations. You'll be informed whenever there is an opportunity to attend these professional development programs.

"PUBLIC RELATIONS NATION": You are required to subscribe to and comment on my weekly blog "Public Relations Nation" at **http://jmorosoff.wordpress.com** (published every Sunday morning, comments due the following Monday). This counts as five (5) points of your final grade.

PERSONAL MEDIA: There is **NO USE of personal electronic devices** (cellphones, laptops, tablets, digital players, etc.) permitted during class time—no exceptions. You may leave the classroom if you must use your cellphone or you will be asked to leave if you ignore this policy. I'm serious.

COMMUNICATION: To contact me outside of class, please make an appointment and see me during the office hours noted at the top of the syllabus. **Once you make an appointment, please keep the appointment and be on time, or give me as much advance notice as possible if you must cancel.** If you email me in the evenings or over the weekends, you may not get a response until the next class day. If you have a personal issue, I urge you to meet with me rather than tell me in an email. A face-to-face talk to discuss personal and/or academic issues is preferable.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- Assignments must be submitted on the due date and in class or they will not be accepted.

- All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced and stapled; spelling and grammar must be correct.

- Don't send your assignments via email unless instructed to do so.
- No work done in another class will be accepted. I reserve the right to discuss your work with my colleagues as a means to assure originality. All work may also be tested against Turnitin and other tools for originality and proper citations of all sources.

GRADES: You are entitled to fairness, consistency, clarity, and good teaching. You're not entitled to a good grade. You earn good grades by mastering the content and subject matter, producing quality work, and making an effort to go beyond course minimums.

While grades on papers and projects can be subjective, you will always be treated fairly and equally. You're more likely to earn an A when your work meets and exceeds every expectation. Very good work will earn an A- or B+. Good work that meets basic competencies will most often receive grades in the B to B- range. Work that is either below expectations, misses some of the requirements, or is late will generally earn a C+, C or C-. Missing work or poorly executed projects will receive a D or F. There are no extra credit assignments or grade curves.

You're encouraged to keep a record of all assignments as a means to track and ensure concurrence on grading throughout the semester. You should also record your own attendance and lateness as both are part of the calculation of your final grade.

PLATFORM PRESENTATION, CONFERENCES, "PR NATION" :	**20%**
YOUR BLOG POSTINGS:	**5%**
ASSIGNMENTS:	**65%**
FINAL PROJECT:	**10%**

NUMBER/LETTER GRADE EQUIVALENTS:

100-94 =	A
93-90 =	A-
89-86 =	B+
85-82 =	B
81-79 =	B-
78-75 =	C+
74-72 =	C
71-69 =	C-
68-65 =	D
0-64 =	F

INC (Incomplete): When requested by the student, the instructor may grant, at her/his discretion, a grade of Incomplete ('I'). An 'I' grade should be given only when unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from completing course work on time. As part of the normal final-grade process, the instructor must submit an 'I' grade on-line to the Office of Academic Records with a default grade, the grade the student will receive if the missing work is not completed. The instructor will decide the time frame in which the student will complete the required course work.

However, the deadline may not exceed the last day of the next full semester following the granting of an 'I' grade. Please refer to the online bulletin of undergraduate grades for the entire University policy and procedure for incomplete grades.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Hofstra University places high value upon educating students about academic honesty. At the same time, the University will not tolerate dishonesty, and it will not offer the privileges of the community to the repeat offender.

It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If you don't understand what plagiarism is and how you can avoid it, you have options. For further information about policies and procedures concerning violations of academic honesty, consult Faculty Policy Series # 11 in Hofstra's *Guide to Pride* and at the University Senate Web site (http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate_FPS_11.pdf).

You are also encouraged to take advantage of structured opportunities to learn about academic honesty such as the Writing Center.

If I have reason to believe you have plagiarized or engaged in any academically dishonest activity, you will fail the course and be reported to the Provost's Office and Dean of Students.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have any documented disability-related concerns that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, please meet with me within the first two weeks of the current semester, so that we can work out the appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are provided on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by the appropriate office on campus.
For more information on services provided by Hofstra, and for submission of documentation of your disability, please contact:
Services for Students with Disabilities
212 Memorial Hall
(516) 463-7075

All disability-related information will be kept confidential.

PR TOOLS – Spring 2014 COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change)

IMPORTANT NOTE: In addition to the assignments in the course calendar, you will be assigned three public relations tools, platforms or programs to describe and briefly demonstrate in class. Your description notes should be typed and handed in on the day you've been assigned to present them (3 points).

September 3

Class will review the syllabus, discuss career goals, and review abilities and past experience using public relations tools. A list of online tools will be assigned for class review.

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 9/8)**

September 8, 10

Blogs
We will examine blogs and how PR professionals can leverage them for themselves and their clients, and review case studies on how these channels are successfully used by corporate, consumer and nonprofit organizations.
Programs: WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr

Assignment #1 (8 points):
1) Select any significant blog and conduct a brief S.W.O.T. analysis **(due 9/10)**
2) Develop a personal blog and submit one blog post for review (you must post at least five times during the semester). Send your link to jeffrey.morosoff@hofstra.edu. **(due 9/15)**

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 9/15)**

September 15

Social Networking

We will provide definitions of social networking along with a closer look at the current top social networking sites. The class will review their social networking assignments and discuss best and worst practices when using social networking sites for PR campaigns.
Programs: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, others

September 17

Writing for Social Networks

The class will focus on and practice the effective use of language and images that can maximize the use of social networks, primarily Twitter and Facebook.

Assignment #2 (8 points): Choose two non-mainstream social networking sites, and provide a brief analysis of the sites and how they're being used for a PR/publicity campaign. **(due 9/22)**

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 9/22)**

September 22

Web Sites
Web site content is divided into three main areas: design, functionality and content. We will describe how these three pillars intersect, and how they can be leveraged for effective and strategic online communications.

Assignment #3 (5 points):
Identify two brand websites for critique. Write a brief review of each pillar of web development: Design, Functionality and Content. **(due 9/24)**

September 24, 29

Digital Photography
We will approach the skills needed for photography as a public relations tool to enhance messages in social media, desktop publishing, and web site and print applications. Students will learn about digital SLR and "point-and-shoot" cameras as well as mobile phone-based photography, creating a final product using enhancement tools. The class will review how to write photo captions and photo releases.
Program: Photoshop

Assignment #4 (6 points):
Photograph a subject or event and then select three photos. Refine the photos digitally, provide captions and prepare a professional photo release **(due 10/1).**

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" and post to your own blog **(due 9/29)**

October 1, 6, 8, 13, 15

<u>**Desktop Publishing**</u>
Students will learn the fundamentals of design and practical applications of using current technology to craft messages to target audiences.
<u>Programs</u>: InDesign, Publisher, others

<u>Assignment #5 (15 points):</u>
1) Create a single-page poster promoting an event or program for your organization. **(due 10/6)**
2) Write, design and produce a three-fold brochure to assist in the branding efforts of a not-for-profit organization **(due 10/8)**
3) Create a four-page newsletter which contains graphic elements, photographs and text aimed at your organization's targeted publics **(due 10/15)**

<u>Blog</u>: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 10/6, 10/13, 10/20)**

October 20, 22

<u>**Audio PSAs**</u>
You will learn how to write and produce public service announcements for radio and online.

<u>Assignment #6 (8 points):</u>
Write and produce a 30-second PSA on behalf of your organization. **(due 10/27)**

<u>Blog</u>: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" and post to your own blog **(due 10/27)**

October 27, 29
November 3, 5

<u>**Video Production**</u>
We will break down specific online video strategies to deliver tailored communication programs to targeted audiences. We will review video PSAs.
<u>Programs</u>: iMovie, YouTube, SoundCloud, Audacity, Ustream, VeriCorder, Voddio

<u>Assignment #7 (10 points):</u>
Script, shoot and edit a 30-second public service announcement to promote your organization. **(Script due 10/29, completed PSA due 11/10)**

<u>Blog</u>: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 11/3, 11/10)**

November 10, 12

Infographics
Class will view the completed PSAs. We will review the creation and use of infographics and create one in class.

Assignment #8 (5 points):
Create an infographic for your imagined client **(due 5/17)**

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 11/17)**

November 17

Media databases
Class will learn the use of Cision and other media databases.

Blog: Post to your own blog **(due 11/19)**

November 19,
December 1, 3, 8, 10

Final project (10 points)
Produce a 3-minute video news release. Instructions are to be reviewed in class. **(You will present your project in class on 12/15).**

Blog: Comment on "Public Relations Nation" **(due 11/24, 12/1, 12/8, 12/15)**
Post to your own blog **(due 12/8)**