



**Department of Journalism/Media Studies/Public Relations**

**PR 100 - 02 (CRN 91257)**

**FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Fall 2016

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:55-4:20 p.m.

Lawrence Herbert SOC, Room 306

**Professor Jeff Morosoff**

**Office /Phone:**

Herbert School of Communication, Room 119 / 516.463.5248

**E-Mail:**

[jeffrey.morosoff@hofstra.edu](mailto:jeffrey.morosoff@hofstra.edu)

**Office Hours:**

Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, 1:15-2:15 p.m.; Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 p.m. For these and other time availability, please email for an appointment.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This is an introductory course in public relations (PR). You will learn how PR is responsible for the development, reinforcement and improvement of attitudes toward institutions, issues and individuals through the implementation of managed plans. We will define PR and examine various distinctions under the public relations “umbrella,” different approaches to each, and the importance of defining an audience, its attitudes and its interactions. You will discover how PR differs from but works in concert with advertising and marketing, and learn the variety of communication tools used for public relations campaigns and media relations. We will examine various aspects of the traditional and new media, understanding how a story moves from idea to communication to placement. You will also learn the PRSA Code of Ethics and review PR’s role in crisis communications and reputation management. We will often reference and examine current, real-world situations and how public relations plays a role in actions and outcomes.

Students enrolled in this course should note the public relations profession demands excellent writing skills, and professional writing for communicating messages effectively will be heavily emphasized. Class work will follow AP and journalistic style. Above all, you will learn to use public relations techniques successfully and responsibly for any professional environment.

**COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** Focusing on messaging from two viewpoints – the communicator’s and the receiver’s – this course explores the dissemination of such information through the practice of public relations, and its effect on attitudes and contemporary culture. Lectures, discussions and practical projects provide, from social and ethical perspectives, first-hand experience in the analysis of public information and the media employed. Outside research and assignment time is required, as is an enhanced awareness of current events and writing styles.

**Goals**

Students will:

- understand the theoretical and practical skills of public relations.
- recognize the way information is disseminated and received.

- appreciate the complex relationship between an organization and its publics.
- develop experience in creating and utilizing techniques to reach audiences.
- receive effective instruction in communication theory and the emphasis of work skills and ethics.
- recognize that the convergence of print, broadcast and on-line journalism has greatly impacted the PR profession, and that good public relations skills successfully move messages through these media.
- work alone and in groups to develop PR materials and campaigns.
- experience a stimulating classroom experience that pays close attention to scholarship, knowledge, ethics and the recognition of a diverse and multicultural global environment.
- when presented with a case study, be able to identify ethical issues involved, critically analyze these issues, and identify the philosophical and professional consideration that underpin their analyses.
- demonstrate the ability to use current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.
- demonstrate proficiency in English grammar and mechanics.
- demonstrate the ability to write cogent, clear and concise prose.
- demonstrate the ability to write in forms and styles appropriate to the topic, audience and outlet.
- demonstrate the ability to evaluate their own and others' work for accuracy and fairness, clarity, style and grammatical correctness.

## **Objectives**

Students will:

- develop the skills and understanding required to build public relations plans that meet the needs of a variety of clients within various interests, gender, ethnicity, race, age, etc.
- understand how the tools of public relations are used for successful communication.
- learn to develop fundamental tools including press releases, media advisories, backgrounders, facts sheets and other materials typically used in a public relations environment.
- use case studies and readings about the many areas of public relations including, community relations, investor relations, government relations, media relations, and employee communications so they may fully understand the extensive reach of the field and its impact on society.
- recognize the importance of professional ethics and become familiar with the Public Relations Society of America's Code of Ethics.
- develop writing and presentation skills essential to relating campaigns to colleagues and clients.
- understand how the tools of public relations are used for successful communication.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:** *The Practice of Public Relations, 13th Edition*, Fraser P. Seitel, (Pearson, 2017), ISBN 13: 978-0-13-417011-4

**REQUIRED READING:** You are required to subscribe and comment weekly to my blog "Public Relations Nation" at <http://jmorosoff.wordpress.com> (published every Sunday morning; comments due by the next class and are worth one (1) point each).

**RECOMMENDED READING:** You are urged to subscribe to and read these and other valuable online free news services that will enhance your knowledge of current media events and public relations news.

- MediaBistro.com
- bulldogreporter.com
- BuzzFeed.com
- Flipboard.com

**SUPPLEMENTAL READING:** You are expected to keep up with web sites and trade publications for public relations professionals and journalists and the newspaper sections that deal particularly with business, media and advertising/public relations. These can include but are not limited to:

- *New York Times*
- *Newsday*
- *Wall Street Journal*
- *Columbia Journalism Review*
- *PR Tactics (PRSA)*
- *The Strategist*

Publications may be held on reserve at the Axinn Library. *Newsday* and *The New York Times*, *Associated Press Style Book*, the Public Relations Society of America website (prsa.org), and other identified sources will be referenced throughout the semester.

Hofstra's library has an online guide to public relations resources which you may find every helpful as you complete this and future PR courses:

<http://libguides.hofstra.edu/content.php?pid=109224&sid=4225474>

**CLASS EXPECTATIONS:** When you are employed by in a professional organization, you're expected to meet deadlines, follow procedures, come to work on time, participate and take notes at meetings, and contact your workplace if you'll be late or absent. As future PR practitioners, the same is expected of you in class. Refer to this syllabus often to stay on track with reading and assignments.

**PARTICIPATION:** Reading the text assignments is an important element of this class. This will give you the full benefit of the course and the information provided. This class involves discussion and feedback, and the textbook chapters plus handouts will supplement discussions. Your attitude, participation and a demonstrated interest in the subject matter will be included in your grade. Extra help is always available, and meetings with me regarding your progress are welcomed and encouraged.

**ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to attend and be on time for every class. More than two (2) unexcused absences or more than three (3) latenesses will result in points deducted from your grade (one point for each excessive absence, one half-point for each excessive lateness) for the semester. Excused absences are given only when I am notified before class. Please e-mail me as soon as you know you will be absent or late.

**COMMUNICATION:** To contact me outside of class, please email me or make an appointment to see me during the office hours noted at the top of the syllabus. **Once you make an appointment, please keep the appointment and arrive on time, or give me as much advance notice as possible if you need to cancel or be late.** If you have a personal issue affecting class performance, I urge you to meet with me. A face-to-face talk to discuss personal and/or academic issues is always preferable.

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

## ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

- **PR professionals must complete their work on time.** So shall you! Assignments must be submitted on the due date and in class or will not be accepted. Missed assignments will result in the loss of points from your final grade.
- **PR professionals take pride in their work.** All written assignments must be **typed, double-spaced and stapled**. Please put your name on the first page and number each page. Save the Word file.
- **PR professionals know that correct grammar and spelling are essential.** Spell check, proofread and do your work as professionally as possible.
- **PR professionals plan ahead.** Print out your assignments before you come to class. Don't send me your assignments via email; they will not be accepted.
- **PR professionals have integrity.** No work or a previous paper done in another class will be accepted. All written work may be tested against Turnitin and other tools for originality and proper citations of all sources. I reserve the right to discuss your work with my colleagues to assure originality.
- **Sources, when required, should be noted in AP style.** Here are some easy references:
  - [www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.aspx?doc\\_id=796](http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.aspx?doc_id=796)
  - [www.crk.umn.edu/library/links/apa5th.htm](http://www.crk.umn.edu/library/links/apa5th.htm)
  - [www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com)

**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 hosting its annual networking dinner on Thursday, November 3 and you are required to attend. If you cannot attend due to a schedule conflict or the small registration fee, you will be required to complete a significant alternate assignment. You must also attend at least one other professional conference, meeting or networking event (see next item).

**PRSSA, PRSA, PRPLI AND RELATED EVENTS:** Meetings and 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, the Public Relations Professionals of Long Island (PRPLI.org), and other related organizations. You'll be informed whenever there are opportunities to attend these professional development programs.

**FINAL PROJECT:** After the midterm exam, the class will be divided into teams to create a public relations campaign and present it on the final days of class. Work and contributions from each member should be shared evenly and be verifiable.

**EXAMS:** A midterm and final exam will be given in class. Make-up exams will be arranged only in emergency situations with prior approval.

**GRADES:** You are entitled to fairness, consistency and clarity. You are 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.

ATTENDANCE:	5%
EVENT PARTICIPATION:	5%
BLOG (PR Nation):	14%
ASSIGNMENTS:	16%
MIDTERM EXAM:	20%
FINAL EXAM:	20%
FINAL PROJECT:	20%

You're far more likely to earn an A or A- when your work exceeds expectations. Work meeting basic competencies and expectations will most often receive grades in the B+ to B- range. Work that is either below par, omits some of the requirements or is late will usually earn a C+, C or C-. Students poorly executing and/or missing assignments may receive a D or F.

Keep a folder of all your work and exams as a means to track and ensure accuracy on grading throughout the semester. You should also record your own attendance and lateness; both are part of the calculation of your final grade. Please schedule at least one office meeting to discuss your success in this course.

**NUMBER/LETTER GRADE EQUIVALENTS:**

100-94 =	A	78-75 =	C+
93-90 =	A-	74-71 =	C
89-85 =	B+	70-69 =	C-
84-81 =	B	68-65 =	D
80-79 =	B-	0-64 =	F

**Incomplete Policy:** Hofstra's policies regarding Incomplete grades, default grades, and associated deadlines can be found in the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Bulletins (<http://bulletin.hofstra.edu/>).

**Academic Honesty:**

Hofstra University Honor Code: "As a member of the Hofstra community I pledge to demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of my life, both inside and out of the classroom. I understand that I am accountable for everything I say and write. I will not misrepresent my academic work, nor will I give or receive unauthorized assistance for academic work. I agree to respect the rights of all members of the Hofstra community. I will be guided by the values expressed in the P.R.I.D.E. Principles. I accept the responsibility to follow this Honor Code at all times."

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious ethical and professional infractions. For information regarding Hofstra's statement of principles with respect to academic honesty, examples of violations, procedures for handling violations, as well as a student's right to appeal a charge, see Faculty Policy Series #11 for undergraduate students ([http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate\\_FPS\\_11.pdf](http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate_FPS_11.pdf)) and Faculty Policy Series #11G for graduate students ([http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate\\_FPS\\_11G.pdf](http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate_FPS_11G.pdf)).

**Student Access Services (SAS):**

If you believe you need accommodations for a disability, please contact for Student Access Services (SAS). In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with

Disabilities Act of 1990, qualified individuals with disabilities will not be discriminated against in any programs, or services available at Hofstra University.

Individuals with disabilities are entitled to accommodations designed to facilitate full access to all programs and services. SAS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will provide students with documented disabilities accommodation letters, as appropriate.

Please note that accommodations may require early planning and are not retroactive; please contact SSD as soon as possible. All students are responsible for providing accommodation letters to each instructor and for discussing with him or her the specific accommodations needed and how they can be best implemented in each course. For more information on services provided by the university and for submission of documentation, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities, 107 Student Center, 516-463-7075

### **Student Policy Prohibiting Discriminatory Harassment, Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct**

Hofstra prohibits sexual and other discriminatory harassment, stalking, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and other sexual misconduct (collectively, “Gender Based Offenses”). If you or someone you know believes they have been subjected to any of these Gender Based Offenses, help is available. To make a report, or for more information about Hofstra’s Student Policy Prohibiting Discriminatory Harassment, Relationship Violence, and Sexual Misconduct (available at <http://hofstra.edu/sexualmisconduct>), please contact the Title IX Coordinator at (516) 463-5841 or [TitleIXCoordinator@hofstra.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@hofstra.edu), or Public Safety at (516) 463-6606. Confidential resources and support are also available from clinicians in Student Counseling Services (516-463-6791), medical professionals at the Health and Wellness Center (516-463-6745), and clergy in the Interfaith Center.

### **Absences for Religious Observance**

Hofstra University recognizes that students and/or faculty may from time to time miss class due to religious observances. Students who anticipate missing class for this reason should notify faculty members in advance. Likewise, faculty members who anticipate missing class for religious observance should notify students in their classes.

As stated in the Faculty Policy Series, "No student shall be expelled or refused admission to Hofstra University because he or she is unable to participate in any examination, study or work requirement because of his or her religious obligations and practices. However, all students are expected to complete all assignments and examinations. It is understood that no adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student who avails him or herself of religious observances. The University, faculty, and student shall work together to achieve a reasonable accommodation concerning any conflicts between educational and religious obligations."

**PR 100 – FALL 2016 COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change)**

- SEP 7      **Course introduction and overview** -- Review of course objectives, policies, procedures, exams, and assignments. We will define public relations and examine PRSA's definition.
- Assignment (due 9/12)** Apart from classroom discussion and textbook definitions, identify at least two unique definitions of *public relations*, and type them along with their sources. Also identify at least three useful PR websites and type them on the same sheet. The PR websites must be for legitimate trade or news organizations--not private companies (avoid .coms). **(2 pts.)**  
Comment on "Public Relations Nation." **(due 9/12)**
- Reading:** Preface and Chapter 1 (pp. xxi-17)
- SEP 12      **PR profession overview** – We will review Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" and its connection to psychological and physiological motivation. We will distinguish between PR, advertising and marketing. We will also discuss agency vs. corporate PR.
- Reading:** Chapters 11-14 (pp. 225-305)
- SEP 14      **The PR umbrella** – The class will review various divisions and jobs in PR including employee, consumer, community, and government relations.
- Assignment (due 9/19):** Comment on "Public Relations Nation."
- Reading:** Chapters 2, 3 (pp. 23-58)
- SEP 19      **Communication** – The class will review the chapter on communication theories and how they relate to the public relations profession. We will also begin our discussion of the history of PR from ancient Greece through today.
- SEP 21      **PR history** – We will review of the history of PR from ancient Greece through today.
- Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." **(due 9/26)**
- Reading:** Chapter 4, 5 (pp. 63-102)
- SEP 28      **Public image and reputation management** –This session will focus on how PR serves as a management function to create, maintain or improve an organization's public image. We will discuss the structure of a public relations department, agency or consultancy.
- Assignment (due 10/3):** Select an individual or company with a negative public image, write a two-page description of the situation with your own suggested public relations solutions, and prepare to share it during the next class. **(2 pts.)**  
Comment on "Public Relations Nation." **(due 10/3)**
- Reading:** Chapter 8 (pp. 149-167)

- OCT 3      **PR research**– We will discuss the essays on negative public image. We will also examine how research is fundamental to every PR effort. Various types of research methods and their implementation will be studied.
- Reading:** Chapter 6 (pp. 106-122)
- OCT 5      **PR ethics** – The PRSA Code of Ethics will be reviewed. Case studies and class discussion will focus on what is considered ethical when managing public relations.
- Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 10/10**)
- OCT 10     **PR ethics** – Guest speaker and grad student Ashley Zacharia will present her independent study on ethics in the PR profession.
- Reading:** Chapter 17 (pp. 355-369)
- OCT 12     **Crisis management** – We will examine through case studies how organizations use PR to mitigate public concerns and manage reputation.
- Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 10/17**)
- OCT 19     **Crisis management (cont'd).** Midterm review.
- Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 10/24**)
- OCT 24     **MIDTERM EXAM**
- Reading:** Chapter 9 (pp. 173-195)
- OCT 26     **Media management** – We will discuss how the media and the PR industry are co-dependent; how the media operates; and the role of the FCC, advertisers and media consumers.
- Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 10/31**)
- Reading:** Chapter 15 (pp. 309-330)
- OCT 31     **Basic tools, Part 1** – You will learn how to write backgrounders and fact sheets.
- Assignment (11/2):** Write a one-page backgrounder (**2 pts.**) and a one-page fact sheet (**2 pts.**) about an imagined company or organization.
- NOV 2      **Basic tools, Part 2** – You will learn the form and function of the press release. Students will also be instructed on crafting pitch letters and media advisories.
- Assignment (due 11/7):** Using the format demonstrated in class, draft a one-page press release to generate a story about your imagined client (**3 pts.**) and a one-page pitch letter to generate interest in a story about your imagined client. (**3 pts.**)  
              Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 11/7**)
- NOV 7      **Guest speaker:** Melissa Connolly, vice president of University Relations, Hofstra



- NOV 9      **PR campaigns** – The class will be instructed on the format of a PR campaign proposal.  
**Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 11/14**)
- NOV 14      **Final project (due 12/12):** Teams of 4-5 will select an institution, identify a PR challenge, and create a PowerPoint proposal for a PR campaign (details to be provided in class).  
**Reading:** Chapter 10 (pp. 200-220).
- NOV 16      **Social media and PR** – We will look at how the Internet has changed traditional forms of PR and continues to evolve within the profession.  
**Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 11/21**)
- NOV 21      **Social media and PR cont'd** – We will discuss blogging, podcasts, video news releases.  
**Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 11/28**)  
**Reading:** Chapter 16 (pp. 334-349)
- NOV 28      **Integrated marketing communications** – We will examine how PR works with other forms of communication and influencers to motivate opinions and actions.
- NOV 30      **Integrated marketing communications** -- continued. Discussion of analysis.  
**Assignment (due 12/5):** Select any organization, analyze and list how it uses multiple media and communication techniques. (**2 pts.**)  
**Reading:** Chapter 7 (pp. 128-144)  
Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 12/5**)
- DEC 5      **PR and the law** -- We will review the First Amendment and laws governing libel and slander. We will also examine copyright laws and free speech challenges presented by the Internet.
- DEC 7      **Team project brainstorming** – Class will discuss the process of project development and review the progress of their PR campaigns.  
**Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation." (**due 12/12**)
- DEC 12      **Team project presentations**
- DEC 13      **Team project presentations**  
**Assignment:** Comment on "Public Relations Nation."
- DEC 14      **FINAL EXAM**