

Spring 2012

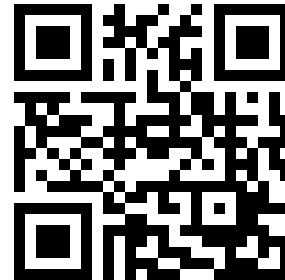
COURSE: The Impact of Public Relations on the News

INSTRUCTOR: M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA
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RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook

Third Edition [Blue Cover or Purple Cover], AuthorHouse, 2009
Author – M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA

The ABCs of Strategic Communication

Second Edition [Green Cover], AuthorHouse, 2008
Author – M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA

Each student must complete all assignments. Class participation is also considered for semester grade. Therefore, it is important that students attend all classes, interact and ask questions. Anyone who arrives late should inform Prof. Litwin. Deadlines and accuracy are vital in the communication profession and are factored into final grades. **Missed tests may not be made up. Late assignments will be downgraded 10 points. Cell phones are off limits during class: No calls – no text messaging – no IMing. An occasional glance to check the time is acceptable. (See below.) But don't "push it."**

More than three absences will affect a student's grade.

Students are responsible for reading assigned chapters in *The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook* and PR terms used in class, which are in *The ABCs of Strategic Communication*.

Prof. Litwin uses SMU's "Teaching Naked" approach in the classroom. Therefore, it is imperative that students visit www.larrylitwin.com, www.slideshare.net and BlackBoard on a regular basis (prior to classes) in addition to relying on books. Knowing assignment content in advance of class makes classes more stimulating and enjoyable. Three more important points: Late assignments **emailed** must be sent to rowanassignment@gmail.com; **and it is each student's responsibility to check his/her email at least once a day. Professor Litwin sends many emails – pdf handouts throughout the semester. Their intent is to save students money. Also, student report cards are posted regularly. Students may link to their report card via www.larrylitwin.com > Student Resources > MicroGrade. The log in is your last name. Your password is your Banner Number.**

Goals:

This communication course is a semester-long journey into the information management world where the professions of journalism and public relations often find strong parallels, but equally as often are locked in competition over how important local, national and world events and issues will be reported and explained to the public. There are no easy answers to the questions that will be discussed. There is likelihood that finding common ground will be difficult and challenging. One thing is certain – the road ahead has numerous signs demanding that you "Stop and Think" before deciding a course of action. Amid the clash of ideas and values perhaps the best to be hoped for is that you will emerge a more discerning consumer of information – a person who examines each issue and event in more than one light and ultimately becomes a part of the informed electorate that is the cornerstone of democracy.

Preparing for Class:

It is mandatory that daily preparation for this class include being conversant with the news of the day. It may be gathered from newspapers (online), television (online) or “pure” Internet sources. Maintain a close watch on issues that trigger public debate. Read newspapers, watch television news and/or surf the Internet. Be informed so you can better participate.

Textbook and Supplemental Reading and Class Participation: Students are expected to read assigned chapters before class and be well prepared before coming to class. Students are encouraged to take initiative to broaden their knowledge by reading additional materials.

In addition, your participation is instrumental for not only moving the class discussion forward, but also contributing to your final grade.

Though attendance is required, just being present does not mean participation. Here are some tips to improve your participation:

Prepare for class. Check BlackBoard at least one day before each class for announcements and supplementary material. **Any “readings” posted on BlackBoard or emailed should be considered important.**

- Bring your book(s) to every class, as it will be referenced during class.
- If you need clarification or want additional explanation, feel free to ask a question.

More than three absences WILL affect a student’s grade.

Use of cell phones, computers, PDAs, etc:

In this class we will maintain a professional level. Use the same courtesy in class as you would in the workplace concerning the use of these devices (ringers on silent, vibrate, no calls, etc.). Because of abuse in previous classes, you may NOT use computers during class.

The Roadmap

The following is an outline of the class schedule. Be cautioned that a few surprises are likely. We will sometimes have guest speakers, movies, videos or just take off on a topic no one anticipated.

Jan. 17: Laying out expectations. We’ll explore the landscape of the course and review the syllabus in detail. First Amendment refresher. Homework: Come to class prepared to discuss the news highlights of the day. Bring a regular (hard) copy of a daily newspaper or print out the news from online sources. Choose from *The New York Times*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Courier-Post*, *Gloucester County Times*, *Atlantic City Press* or other daily news source.

Jan.19: Anatomy of a newspaper: Part One. The newspaper mission. Organization of departments. How finances are organized. How news is gathered and reported. Class discussion. **Assignments – READ Chapter 9 – *The PR Playbook* and listen to: "NewsWorks, WHYY's launch into interactive news media" Thursday, November 11th, 2010.**

Via this link...

<http://why.org/cms/radiotimes/2010/11/11/newsworks-whyys-launch-into-interactive-news-media/>

Your assignment is to come to class to turn in...a list of 10 terms new to you once you hear and look at this website.

Jan. 24: Anatomy of a newspaper: Part Two. The elements of a newspaper. What journalists should know. What the public expects. The move to online – interactive journalism. Class discussion of Jan. 22 assignment. **(Chapter 9 – *The PR Playbook*)**

Jan. 26: Anatomy of Public Relations: Part One (or completion of Anatomy of a newspaper. A survey of its purposes and how it functions in an increasingly complex information society. **The MAC Triad Plus P and T. (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 9 – *The PR Playbook*)**

Jan. 31: Anatomy of Public Relations: Part Two. More on public relations and cross platforming (1:1) to deliver messages. Students should arrive prepared to answer questions as they relate to today's news affected by public relations. **(Chapters 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10 – *The PR Playbook*)**

Feb. 2: The newspaper's role in the community. How public relations plays a crucial role in news relationships with the community. Class discussion and debate.

Feb. 7 and 9: The role of Ethics in Journalism **(Chapter 16 – *The PR Playbook*)**. Class discussion.

Feb. 14, 16, 21 and 23: Form Case Study teams and let teams prepare to debate pros and cons in class. (See debate topic below [Feb. 28, March 1, 6 and 8].) There will be general topic discussion each day.

March 2: Distribute mid-term. It is turned in **March 8.**

Feb. 28, March 1, 6 and 8: Presentations: The collision of news and public relations: Four teams will be assembled. Two will represent Penn State's approach to the Jerry Sandusky story and the university's strategic approach through the public relations/media relations office. Two teams will represent

the media – the journalists covering the “Penn State/Sandusky” story. The media teams will explore daily coverage – issues, etc. Every aspect from both sides – Penn State’s and the media’s – should be debated. **Debate and post mortems.** (Topic – subject to change.) **Each team submits a group paper summarizing its preparation and approach. Each student receives a group grade plus an individual grade. Thus, each student’s section MUST BE properly labeled.**

March 20, 22, 27 and March 29: Form Case Study #2 teams and let them prepare to debate pros and cons in class. (See debate topic below (April 3, 5, 10 and 12.) There will be general topic discussion each day.

April 3, 5, 10 and 12: Presentations: The 2012 Presidential Election. (Topic – subject to change.) Four teams – two representing the media and two representing the candidates. Ground rules will be set during class discussion. The key is: the media should be prepared to ask the tough and probing questions and the candidates’ strategic counselors should be totally prepared to present their messages in a persuasive and/or convincing manner. **Debate and post mortems. Each team submits a group paper summarizing its preparation and approach. Each student receives a group grade plus an individual grade. Thus, each student’s section MUST BE properly labeled.**

April 17: Analysis and post mortem.

April 19: Catch up

April 24: Catch up

April 26: Take-home final exams will be distributed.

May 1: Final exams MUST be turned in on THIS date.

The following is university policy: Once drop-add ends, students are permitted to add a course only in cases of documented emergency. The special form (hardship form) for late schedule adjustment specifically calls for a description and attached documentation of the particular emergency in that student’s case.

<p>STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT PASSED BY UNIVERSITY SENATE: 5/10/05 APPROVED BY INTERIM PROVOST: 8/25/05</p>
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Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations. We look forward to working with you to meet your learning goals.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is a very serious offense. If you use any material that you did not create, you must provide attribution and copyright permission. This includes copying from the Internet. Plagiarism also includes passing off another student's work as your own or giving your work to another student. When in doubt, ask me. For Rowan's complete academic honesty policy, download the Student Information Guide from <http://www.rowan.edu/studentaffairs/infoguide> (see Academic Integrity Policy).

Anyone caught plagiarizing will receive an F for the course. (This is a statement used in Journalism Department. We are using it for this class.)

**Please fill out info sheet on last page
and bring to first class.**

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION

Student Information

Your Name _____

Banner Number _____

College Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Best Number) _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Fax _____

email _____

High School _____ Town _____

Declared Major _____ Year _____

Other Colleges Attended _____

Profession/Employer _____

Professional Goal _____