

Fall, 2008

COURSE: Introduction to Public Relations

INSTRUCTOR: M. Larry Litwin, APR, Fellow PRSA
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TEXTS: *The Public Relations Practitioner's Playbook*
(Second Edition [Blue Cover], Kendall/Hunt, 2008)
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. But don't "push it."**

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*. You will be given a **Monday Lecture Schedule** with matching *PR Playbook* chapters to read for precept class.

Introduction to Public Relations is a comprehensive undergraduate course that explores the history and role of public relations in society. As time permits, we will look at how the following affect us: mass media, persuasion, publicity, radio and television, special events, crisis management, communication techniques, research and evaluation, and communication law and ethics. *Introduction to Public Relations* is primarily a theory course. However, your instructor will attempt to make it as practical as possible. Your professor's personal objective is to prepare his students for *their* future rather than *his* past. He is here to HELP.

Course Objectives

- [] Students will understand the basic body of knowledge underlying the public relations profession.
- [] Students will understand how public relations functions in society and makes its contributions.

- [] Students will apply PR theories to actual public relations problems and challenges.
- [] Students will visit and interview a practicing public relations professional.
- [] Students will interact with professor/practitioners and share their experiences.

Assignments and Grading

The course is primarily theory with as much practical application to cases through assignments and discussion. A team of professors delivers the weekly large group lectures. Your assigned professor conducts the small group class. *Introduction to Public Relations* will be an interactive class. Students are encouraged to participate.

Examinations: (50% of grade) There will be two comprehensive examinations plus quizzes. Questions may be taken from any class lectures or discussion. Test **ONE** will be a *mid-term*. The *final examination* will mainly cover material from the *mid-term* on. However, students may be asked questions that public relations practitioners are expected to answer.

Assignments: (50% of grade) Assignments correspond to the practical aspects of the curriculum.

- Outline of each week's Monday lecture [Lecture 1 due Sept.10]
- Define Public Relations [Due second class session – due Sept. 10]
- Evaluation of an institutional ad
- Field Interview (25% of final grade – see below)
- Public Relations department-generated news stories. (Each student will be expected to identify three print articles and explain why he/she [student] believes each article originated from a public relations practitioner or office.)

Field Interview: Each student will be required to identify a *public relations practitioner*, interview that person, and write a four to five page report of the experience. You may **NOT** substitute an advertising, promotions, sales or marketing person. **This assignment is absolutely due on Wednesday, Nov. 19. (It may be turned in early.)** Students must fill in attached form identifying the person to be interviewed (for approval). Upon approval, they may conduct the interview. **When the final paper is turned in, student must attach to it, the interviewee's business card and a copy of the student's thank you letter to interviewee.**

Type, (double-space) and correctly label all assignments and reports. Since writing is a key skill in the public relations profession, make certain that grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation and style are perfect. For each written assignment, content and writing will count separately and equally. Just to make it clear, **FIVE** points will be deducted for every spelling, grammatical and typographical error.

Welcome to public relations! Participate as fully as you can in all discussions. Even if you are not a public relations major, the knowledge and skills you acquire will definitely help you in your career. Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful semester!

Our next precept class is Wednesday, Sept. 10. For that class, ask five people of varying demographics to define public relations. On a sheet of paper, type their definition, gender, age and occupation.

Grading

A = 95-100

A- = 94-92

B+ = 91-88

B = 87-84

B- = 83-82

C+ = 81-78

C = 77-74

C- = 73-72

D+ = 71-67

D = 66-64

D- = 63-60

F = 59 and below

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.

**STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
PASSED BY UNIVERSITY SENATE: 5/10/05
APPROVED BY INTERIM PROVOST: 8/25/05**

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.

If you have a question about a class being held, call me at 856-767-7730. Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful semester!

Introduction to Public Relations

Interview Record

Your Name _____

Name of Interviewee _____

Title _____

Name of Firm _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Telephone ()- _____

e-mail _____

Interview Date and Time _____

Who helped to arrange this interview? _____

Do you have any comments?

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION

Student Information

Your Name _____

College Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary (Home/Cell) Phone _____

Secondary (Work) Phone _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

High School _____ Town _____

Declared Major _____ Year _____

Other Colleges Attended _____

Profession/Employer _____

Professional Goal _____