



J SCHOOL – SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, COMMUNICATION, AND PUBLISHING

DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC RELATIONS
COURSE CODE: CPMCCP150
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the strategic roles and functions of the Public Relations (PR) practitioner. Students evaluate the context in which PR is practiced, gain an understanding of the potential and practice of PR as a management function, and critically analyze the structure of PR management, its role, and techniques. In addition, students will be introduced to the rhetorical arguments that impact PR activities and will be made aware of the importance of professionalism and ethics in the practice of public relations.

2. OBJECTIVES

The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the fundamentals of the Public Relations process, its professional strategies and its most common activities.

At the end of the course students should be able to:

- recognize the steps of the PR process and their related activities
- define public relations and identify instances of PR in multiple contexts;
- develop a basic PR campaign plan and know the fundamental stages to implement it
- analyze and evaluate the results of a PR campaign
- know how to prepare a news release
- understand the relations between PR and social media

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, *PR Today. The authoritative guide to public relations*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2012

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.
Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

(Books listed below are available in the FUA library)

Cutlip, S.M., Center, A.H., Broom, G.M. *Effective Public Relations*. Pearson Education, 2006.

Guth, David W. and Marsh, Charles. *Adventures in Public Relations: Case Studies and Critical Thinking*. Boston, Mass.; Allyn and Bacon, 2005.

Newsom, Doug, Van Slyke, Judy, and Kruckeberg, Turk and Dean. *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*. 9th edition. Thomson/Wadsworth, 2006.

Smith, Ronald. D. *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*. 3rd edition. Routledge, 2009.

Wilcox, Dennis L. and Cameron, Glen T. *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, 10th edition, Pearson Education Inc., 2012.

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

7. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

20% Class Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam

25% Final Exam

25% Paper/Project

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

Absences are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

Participation: Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Midterm** exam accounts for 20% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The final **Paper/Project** accounts for 25% of the course grade.

- Format: topic, length, guidelines, and due date will be provided on the course website.
- Material for research will be available in the FUA Library in Corso Tintori 21.

The **Final** exam accounts for 25% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course

website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format: the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The Final Exam is cumulative

12. LESSONS

| Lesson 1 | |
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| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | Understanding Public Relations. Presentation of the course; introduction to the class syllabus. Information on assignments and exams. Information on field trips and related activities. Bibliography and suggested readings. |
| Objectives | Students will be informed on the level, requirements, and main contents and practices of the course. Students will be familiar with the global scope of the public relations industry. |
| Readings/Assignments | Chapter 1, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

| Lesson 2 | |
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| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR Ethics |
| Objectives | Students will become familiar with PR ethical dilemmas and ethical professionalism in PR in different working situations. |
| Readings/Assignments | Chapter 2, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

| Lesson 3 | |
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| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | The make-up of the PR industry |
| Objectives | Understand the various branches of working in the PR industry. |
| Readings/Assignments | Chapter 3, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

| Lesson 4 | |
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| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR, marketing and advertising. |
| Objectives | Understand the connections and the difference between PR, marketing, and advertising. |
| Readings/Assignments | Chapter 4, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

| Lesson 5 | |
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| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR in the online world |
| Objectives | Students will grasp the connections between a PR campaign and the use of the |

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| | Internet and social media to maximize its results. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 7, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 6 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR and the law |
| Objectives | Know how to handle a sampling of legal problems concerning PR (privacy, copyright, trademark, employee speech, etc.) |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 9, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 7 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | MIDTERM EXAM |

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| Lesson 8 | |
| NA | ACADEMIC BREAK |

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| Lesson 9 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | Planning and strategy: POSTAR |
| Objectives | Become familiar with the most common and efficient strategies to handle a PR campaign on classical and new media. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 10, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 10 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR in practice: Pitching stories |
| Objectives | Develop a basic awareness of pitching strategies required by the PR profession. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 11, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 11 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | PR in practice: Media skills. |
| Objectives | Develop a basic awareness of media skills required by the PR profession. Devising a news release. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 12, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 12 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | Event management within a PR campaign |
| Objectives | Learn the fundamental elements and strategies to arrange and conduct events related to a PR campaign |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 13, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website |

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| Lesson 13 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | Crisis management: the power of persuasion |
| Objectives | Identify crisis related to a PR context and learn possible techniques and strategies to provide effective solutions. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 14, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 14 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | Reaching multicultural audiences |
| Objectives | Students will be able to identify the elements according to which to segment relevant target audiences for specific PR activities. |
| Readings/ Assignments | Chapter 15, T. Morris, S. Goldsworthy, <i>PR Today</i> . Assignments will be covered on course website. |

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| Lesson 15 | |
| Meet | In class |
| Lecture | FINAL EXAM |