

## PR 250: Strategic Public Relations: An Introduction Number of Units: 4

**Fall 2016—Mondays—6:00pm – 9:20pm**

**Section:** 21184

**Location:** ANN 211.

**Textbook:** Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics, Updated 11<sup>th</sup> edition, Wilcox, Cameron, 2016

**Instructor:** Gregory Bishop

**Office:** prior coordination required

**Office Hours:** Mondays 5:00-6:00pm

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**Phone:** 931-561-5219 (call or text)

### I. Course Description

Strategies and practices in the growing field of public relations/strategic communication, including landmark cases, special emphasis on historical roots, evolution, current and future practice. This course is designed to give students a broad understanding of the field of Public Relations and help them determine if it is a career field they may endeavor to pursue.

### II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

This course is designed to introduce you to public relations as a professional practice. How is public relations defined? What disciplines make up the public relations profession? What are the tenets of the public relations field? Where might you fit in? How is public relations practiced here and abroad; in a corporation and in an agency; in government, in politics and in the non-profit sector?

Public relations mean different things to different people. We will define what it means to be a public relations professional, how you learn the public relations craft and how you develop and hone your public relations skills. We will cover the basic process of public relations research, planning, communication, evaluation and the use of communications strategies to achieve organizational goals.

Through lectures, reading, practical exercises, guest speakers, research, writing, teamwork and individual effort, we will explore the world of PR.

#### COURSE OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of Journalism 250, Strategic Public Relations, An Introduction, students can expect A keen understanding of how public relations is defined and practiced - by career, by discipline, and by personal interest.

1. A strongly developed awareness of the myriad of specialized choices that exist for a public relations professional.
2. A foundation for comprehending why and how public relations is employed by nearly everyone.
3. A practical knowledge of the rationale for, and process to achieve, sophisticated, disciplined planning.
4. A basic understanding of the profession sufficient to succeed in USC Annenberg's undergraduate Public Relations Studies program.

### III. Description of Assignments

My grading system is merit based. Your grades will be determined by comparing your work to the overall level of performance among your fellow students. The best work will achieve the highest grades, and those who don't perform as well as their peers will receive the lowest grades. The assignments you will be responsible for are quizzes, a group case presentation project, a mid-term exam, a term paper, a final individual project, and your individual class participation.

### IV. Grading

**a. Breakdown of Grade.** Course grading is based on the 400-point system outlined below. There will be a total of 9 quizzes, 7 of which will be worth 1pt each and 2 quizzes will be worth 1.5pts each, for a total of 10 points.

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Quizzes	40	10
Case Presentation (group project)	60	15
Mid---Term exam	80	20
Term Paper	80	20
Final Project	100	25
Participation	40	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### b. Grading Scale

97 to 100: A+	83 to less than 87: B	70 to less than 73: C-
93 to less than 97: A	80 to less than 83: B-	65 to less than 70: D
90 to less than 93: A-	77 to less than 80: C+	60 to less than 65: D-
87 to less than 90: B+	73 to less than 77: C	0 to less than 60: F

#### c. Grading Standards

I do not apply a rigid application of arbitrary percentages in the distribution of grades (i.e., only giving A's or B's to a certain percentage of the class). You will receive the grade you deserve based on the quality of the work you submit relative to the rest of your peers.

I give a quiz nearly every class session. Quizzes are solely based on the reading assignments. **READ AND STUDY YOUR BOOK.** I do not require memorized definitions of terms, rather you need to demonstrate you have a grasp of the concept and are able to articulate the meaning clearly and in your own words.

Attendance, participation, and **READING** your text are critical to success in this class. The difference between a solid letter grade, or a "-" or "+" could be missing one day of class.

The following will give you an idea on my thinking when it comes to grading:

**"A" grades** have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material, professionally organized. You follow instructions that we cover in class. Excellent organization and flow; original and creative thinking. You clearly demonstrate the concepts and ideas that we discuss in class and thoroughly follow the planning model. You show creativity in packaging/distribution methods. High end of scale: professionally presentable today as is.

**"B" projects** have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes and show potential as a good writer. You follow most of the instructions we cover in class. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary

element such as astonishingly creative idea or strategy. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing. You demonstrate a general understanding of the ideas we discuss in class.

**“C” projects** have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. Hackneyed elements such as trite strategies and tactics. Little or no facts/figures included. Little or no creativity shown. You don’t follow the planning model or you improperly apply concepts that we discussed in class.

**“D” projects** have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of the concepts we covered in class. Needs to work with writing coach.

**“F” projects** are not rewritable, late or not turned in.

<b>Participation in Class Discussion Grading</b>			
<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>EXEMPLARY</b> 1.0	<b>SATISFACTORY</b> .50-.75	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b> 0-.25
<b>Frequency</b>	Frequent contribution to class discussion.	Regular contribution to class discussion	Seldom or no contribution to class discussion
<b>Relevance</b>	Contributions to class directly address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity.	Contributions to class address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity, but in some cases only.	Contributions to class do not directly address the question or problem posed by the discussion activities.
<b>Insight</b>	Contributions to class offer original or thoughtful insights, analyses, or observations that demonstrate a strong grasp of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.	Contributions to class offer some insight, analysis, or observation to the topic but may not demonstrate a full understanding or knowledge of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.	Contributions to class do not offer any significant insight, analysis, or observation related to the topic. No knowledge or understanding is demonstrated regarding concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.
<b>Support</b>	Contributions to class support all claims and opinions with either rational argument or evidence.	Contributions to class generally support claims and opinions with evidence or argument, but may leave some gaps where unsupported opinions still appear.	Contributions to class do not support their claims with either evidence or argument. The contributions contain largely unsupported opinion.

<b>Final Group Project Grading</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group produces sound, thought-provoking analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.</li> <li>• Thoroughly examines all pertinent aspects of a given organization with a singular, clear purpose.</li> <li>• Formulates innovative, valid conclusions grounded in sound empirical evidence.</li> <li>• Effectively delivers engaging, informative multimedia presentation on research findings.</li> <li>• Provides defensible implementation plan for the organization, including themes, messages, channels, sources etc.</li> <li>• Optimally structures and organizes content in written product and presentation.</li> <li>• Delivers professional quality paper and presentation, without grammatical errors, typos, etc.</li> <li>• Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards.</li> <li>• Meets all posted deadlines for project deliverables.</li> </ul>	<p>Exemplary 54-60 pts</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group produces sound, interesting analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.</li> <li>• Examines all pertinent aspects of a given organization with a singular, clear purpose.</li> <li>• Formulates innovative conclusions grounded in sound empirical evidence.</li> <li>• Delivers engaging, informative multimedia presentation on research findings.</li> <li>• Effectively structures and organizes content in the written product and the multimedia presentation.</li> <li>• Delivers professional quality paper and presentation, without grammatical errors, typos, etc.</li> <li>• Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards.</li> <li>• Meets all posted deadlines for project deliverables.</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory 48-53 pts</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group produces interesting analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.</li> <li>• Examines some pertinent aspects of a given organization without identifying a singular, clear purpose.</li> <li>• Paper/presentation lacks in the professional quality and standards expected of today's PR professionals.</li> </ul>	<p>Unacceptable 0-47 pts</p>

### **V. Assignment Submission Policy**

- A. All assignments are due on the dates specified **at the BEGINNING OF CLASS**. I WILL accept early assignments, but I WILL NOT accept late assignments. Late assignments will automatically be given a grade of 0/F.
- B. Assignments must be submitted on paper. I will accept an email copy to meet the deadline, but I do my grading on your documents, so you must follow-up with a hard copy.

## **VI. . Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Besides reading and studying your reading for each quiz, you must keep up with current events. 2016 is an important election year, so keeping up with the political landscape (foreign and domestic affairs) is important.

## **VII. Laptop Policy**

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg [Virtual Commons](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

## **VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

***Important note to students:*** *Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change – and probably will change – based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.*

	<b>Topics/Daily Activities</b>	<b>Readings and Homework</b>	<b>Deliverable/ Due Dates</b>
<b>Class 1</b> Aug 22	WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF J-250 Housekeeping - Syllabus review - Policies and procedures Public Relations - What is it? - Misconceptions about public relations - What might your role be?	None	Quiz: NONE Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 2</b> Aug 29	WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS - The history of PR – how it got started; how it has evolved - The functions of PR - The model of public relations - Term paper -- What you need to know	Read preface and Chapters 1 and 2	Quiz 1: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 3</b> <b>HOLIDAY</b> SEP 5	<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>– Have a safe holiday weekend</b>	
<b>Class 4</b> Sep 12	WHERE DOES PR FIT IN AN ORGANIZATION and ETHICS AND LAW - PR Departments, agencies, boutique firms, consultants, etc., etc., etc. - Ethics in PR...really? Yes, Really. - PR and the Law...this lecture will save your career	Read chapters 3, 4 and 12	Quiz 2: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 5</b> Sep 19	COMMUNICATION AND THE ART OF PERSUASION - Communication – a public relations perspective - What is public opinion and how can PR influence or persuade it - Term paper proposals	Read Chapters 7 and 9	Quiz 3: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 6</b> Sep 26	HOW DO YOU BEGIN TO “DO PR?” - Planning: the value of a communications plan; how to create one; why create one. - Research: Sorry...there’s math in PR too! Why is it important; how is it done; how to use it - Group Presentation Assignments	Read Chapters 5 and 6	Quiz 4: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 7</b> Oct 3	MID-TERM EXAMINATION	<b>Study for the mid-term</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Class 8</b> Oct 10	THE WHO, THE WHAT AND THE WHY – AUDIENCE ANALYSIS, STORYTELLING AND	1. Read Chapters 11 and 14 <b>2. TERM PAPER PROPOSALS DUE TODAY.</b>	Quiz 5: 1.5pts Participation: 1pt

<b>Class 8</b> Oct 10	THE WHO, THE WHAT AND THE WHY – AUDIENCE ANALYSIS, STORYTELLING AND STRATEGIES - Defining your audience - Targeting your message - What’s a press release, media alert, pitch, etc.	1. Read Chapters 11 and 14 <b>2. TERM PAPER PROPOSALS DUE TODAY.</b>	Quiz 5: 1.5pts Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 9</b> Oct 17	MORE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS - The art of the presentation. - How to use Radio and TV in today’s media environment. - What’s a press conference and how do you conduct one? - Mid-term exam review	1. Read Chapters 15 and 16	Quiz 6: 1.5pts Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 10</b> Oct 24	NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND EVALUATION - Social media as a PR Tool? - Evaluation? Yes, there’s math in PR....sorry.	1. Continue Case Study work 2. Read Chapters 13 and 8.	Quiz 7: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 11</b> Oct 31	<b>GROUP CASE PRESENTATIONS</b>		Quiz: No Quiz
<b>Class 12</b> Nov 7	CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS AND PR IN CORPORATIONS - What to do when your worst-case scenario comes true.	Read Chapters 10 and 17.	Quiz 8: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 13</b> Nov 14	POLITICS, GOVERNMENT AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS - Learn from politicians and their PR machines. - Government Public Affairs.	Read Chapters 19 and 21.	Quiz 9: 1pt Participation: 1pt
<b>Class 14</b> Nov 21	ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS PR - Is it as fun as it sounds? - What are your career options? - Final Project Assignments.	<u>*** TERM PAPERS DUE TODAY</u> <u>***</u>	Quiz: No Quiz
<b>Class 15</b> Nov 28	<b>FINAL REVIEW DAY</b>		
<b>NO CLASS</b> Dec 5	<b>STUDY DAYS</b>	<b>HAVE A GREAT, SAFE WEEKEND</b>	

## IX. Policies and Procedure

### Additional Policies

#### WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

- Class starts at 6:30 p.m. SHARP. I am a former U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel...self-discipline and professionalism are important in school and in life...tardiness and absences will be detrimental to your grade. **You do not need to request permission to miss class, leave early or come late. You’re an adult. I leave those decisions to you.** We meet once a week; missing class will leave a significant gap in your learning so I suggest you find a “battle buddy” to share notes, assignments and handouts from any missed classes.
- I plan to give you a quiz in nearly EVERY CLASS SESSION. Quizzes will only cover your reading assignments. **READ THE BOOK. If you are late and a quiz is in progress, you cannot take it. If you are absent, there are no make---ups.**

3. Assignments are due to me at the beginning of class in hard copy, or via email. I WILL NOT accept late homework. If you forget your homework, it is late; if you email it to me and the time stamp on the email says 6:31 or later, you are late. All assignments will be complete, double-spaced and typed, with no handwritten edits.
4. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a fellow student. I do not recap or e-mail assignments or notes if you have missed class.
5. Class participation is expected and impacts your final grade. Everyone is expected to contribute. If you're shy and you don't want to speak in front of others, you're in the wrong business.
6. There should only be one discussion going on at a time in class. Paying attention to the speaker, whether it is the instructor, fellow student or guest is a sign of respect and professionalism. Unprofessional behavior will not be tolerated.
7. Do not use your computers during class for anything but class-assigned work or note taking.
8. Cell phones will be turned off and IGNORED during class. No texting during class.
9. There will be no make-ups for the mid-term. There will be no extensions for the term paper or final project. You must complete the mid-term, term paper and final project to pass the class.
10. COMPLETE YOUR READING ASSIGNMENTS!! DON'T FALL BEHIND.

#### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME:

Now, let me help you relax...

1. I take the teaching of this course seriously and I enjoy the interaction with students. I will come each week with the goal of helping you prepare for the world and for the world of public relations. My hope is to make this class interesting, fun, worthwhile and something to which you look forward.
2. I am open to your questions and welcome the opportunity to discuss any issues.
3. This syllabus is a general guideline for what we will cover during the semester. Other assignments, such as written homework and class projects, will be assigned.
4. Everything in this syllabus will be covered. However, the schedule may change to accommodate the calendars of guest speakers.

### **Internships**

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### a. Academic Conduct

#### *Plagiarism*

Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words, is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11---00---behavior---violating---university---standards---and---appropriate---sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific---misconduct/>.

#### *USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity*

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators."

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

### b. Support Systems

#### *Equity and Diversity*

*Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://dps.usc.edu/contact/report/>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <https://sarc.usc.edu/> describes reporting options and other resources.*

#### *Support with Scholarly Writing*

*A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://ali.usc.edu/> which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.*

#### *The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

*[http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.*

*Students requesting test-related accommodations will need to share and discuss their DSP recommended accommodation letter/s with their faculty and/or appropriate departmental contact person at least three weeks before the date the accommodations will be needed. Additional time may be needed for final exams. Reasonable exceptions will be considered during the first three weeks of the semester as well as for temporary injuries and for students recently diagnosed. Please note that a reasonable period of time is still required for DSP to review documentation and to make a determination whether a requested accommodation will be appropriate.*

#### *Stress Management*

*Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.*

### *Emergency Information*

*If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.*

### **X. About Your Instructor**

I'm a former Army Officer, entrepreneur, marketing and PR expert, and video/film producer. I have served in the Army in traditional public relations (public affairs) positions, in marketing and advertising for Army recruiting, and as the branded entertainment officer for the Army. I have worked on marketing and PR programs for brands such as Fox Television, KFC, and as a consultant for major advertising agencies and entertainment entities like HBO, Electronic Arts, Fox Television, Lifetime, Netflix, History Channel, and others. I have produced feature films, television and digital content and I am a partner in the All Warrior Network, a digital military-themed entertainment channel with distribution channels on Hulu, Amazon, Playstation Network, AT&T U-verse, Vimeo OnDemand, YouTube and others. I am the CMO and partner in both Musa Productions, LLC and Musa Military Entertainment Consulting, Inc. I have been teaching at USC for more than six years.