



Department of Journalism/Media Studies/Public Relations

PR 100 - 01 (CRN 93224)

FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Fall 2015

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:45pm-2:10pm

Breslin Hall, Room 202

Instructor	Prof. Mark J. Grossman
Office Hours	Upon request, as well as before and after class. (Mailbox in Herbert 322A)
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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 segment, and the importance of defining an audience, its attitudes and its needs. You will discover how PR differs from 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. We will often reference and examine current, real-world situations and how public relations plays a role in actions and outcomes.

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 in 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, syntax, punctuation, etc.
- 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, 12th Edition*, Fraser P. Seitel, (Pearson, 2014), ISBN 13: 978-0-13-308357-6

REQUIRED READING: You are required to subscribe to and comment weekly on Prof. Morosoff's blog "Public Relations Nation" at <http://jmorosoff.wordpress.com> (published every Sunday morning; comments due the following Tuesday). The topic(s) discussed in the blog may be used for class discussion that week.

RECOMMENDED READING: You are urged to subscribe to and read online news services that will enhance your knowledge of current media events and public relations news. A good way to do that is to subscribe to the publications' Twitter feeds. Some examples are: @PRNews, @RaganComms, @PRSANewPros, @PRDaily, @PRSA, and @Mediabistro.

SUPPLEMENTAL READING: You are expected to keep up with websites and trade publications for public relations professionals and journalists and the newspaper sections that deal particularly with business, media, and advertising/public relations. These include but are not limited to: *New York Times*, *Newsday*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *PR Tactics (PRSA)*, and *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 are expected to meet deadlines, follow procedures, come to work on time, participate and take notes at meetings, and contact your workplace if you're going to be late or absent. As future PR practitioners, the same will be expected of you in class.

PARTICIPATION: Reading the text assignments will give you the full benefit of this class 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 and understanding of the subject 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 and due to a bonifide reason (ie. serious illness or injury, a job interview, a significant family event such as a funeral, a sudden childcare need, an officially sanctioned college activity, or a military obligation.) Please e-mail me as soon as you know you will be absent or late.

COMMUNICATION: To contact me outside of class, please send me an email to discuss the matter, or to schedule a telephone or in-person appointment to talk. If you have a personal issue affecting your class performance, I urge you to meet with me rather than communicate via email.

PERSONAL MEDIA: **There is NO USE of electronic devices** (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) permitted during class time except if it relates to a class activity, such as the use of PolleEverywhere.

ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

- **PR professionals must complete their work on time.** So should 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. Handwritten assignments will not be accepted.
- **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 until at least the end of the semester.
- **PR professionals know that correct grammar and spelling are essential.** Spell check, proofread, proofread again, to ensure that your work is as professional as possible.
- **PR professionals plan ahead.** Print out your assignments before you come to class. Don't send me your assignments via email.

- **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
 - www.crk.umn.edu/library/links/apa5th.htm
 - www.apstylebook.com

PRSSA: You are urged to attend meetings and join the Hofstra chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). So to <http://www.hofstraprssa.com/> for details and meeting dates.

PRSSA, PRSA, PRPLI AND RELATED EVENTS: 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, and other related organizations. Check their websites for opportunities to attend these professional development programs.

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

FINAL PROJECT: In mid-semester the class will be divided into teams to create a public relations campaign for an approved client. Your team will present your campaign in class. Work and contributions from each member should be shared evenly and verifiable.

GRADES: I don’t give students grades . . . students *earn* their grade by mastering the content and subject matter, producing quality work, and making an effort to go beyond course minimums.

ATTENDANCE	5%
HOMEWORK	17%
PR TIPS PRESENTATION	8%
BLOG (PR Nation)	10%
MIDTERM EXAM	20%
FINAL EXAM	20%
FINAL PROJECT	20%
	100%

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 way to track and ensure accuracy on grading throughout the semester. You should also record your own attendance/lateness; both are part of the grade calculation.

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

INC (Incomplete): When requested by the student, the instructor may grant, at her/his discretion, a grade of Incomplete ('I'). An 'I' grade should be given only when unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from completing course work on time. As part of the normal final-grade process, the instructor must submit an 'I' grade online to the Office of Academic Records with a default grade, the grade the student will receive if the missing work is not completed. The instructor will decide the time frame in which the student will complete the required course work. However, the deadline may not exceed the last day of the next full semester following the granting of an 'I' grade. Please refer to the online bulletin of undergraduate grades for the entire University policy and procedure for incomplete grades.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Hofstra University places high value upon educating students about academic honesty. At the same time, the University will not tolerate dishonesty, and it will not offer the privileges of the community to repeat offenders.

It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If you don't understand what plagiarism is and how you can avoid it, you have options. For further information about policies and procedures concerning violations of academic honesty, consult Faculty Policy Series # 11 in Hofstra's *Guide to Pride* and at the University Senate Web site (http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/Faculty/Senate/senate_FPS_11.pdf).

You are also encouraged to take advantage of structured opportunities to learn about academic honesty at the Writing Center.

If I have reason to believe you have plagiarized or engaged in any academically dishonest activity, you will fail the course and be reported to the Provost's Office and Dean of Students.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have any documented disability-related concerns that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, please meet with me within the first two weeks of the current semester so that we can implement any appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are provided on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances, and documentation have been evaluated by the appropriate office on campus. **For more information on services provided by Hofstra, and for submission of documentation of your disability, please contact: Services for Students with Disabilities, 212 Memorial Hall, (516) 463-7075**

All disability-related information will be kept strictly confidential.

INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION: "PR Tools and PR Hacks"

This will be a student-led weekly discussion about the many tools that the Public Relations Practitioner have at their disposal. The demands on PR practitioners have grown and diversified over the years, and technology has helped those in the PR trade to meet the very challenging strategic goals they are asked to achieve, as well as the day-to-day work in their agency, company, or organization.

Each student will be assigned a given class to make a presentation. Students should choose a unique product or service (most likely, something related to technology) that has help the PR practitioner in his or her craft.

See examples at: <http://professorgrossman.com/pr-tools-and-pr-hacks/>

If the product or service is a true “hack” with ethical implications, students may still present on the topic but should discuss the ethical dilemma as part of the class presentation. Each student must demonstrate at least one practical application of the tip or “hack.” Students are strongly encouraged to use handouts and/or on-screen presentation material to help best illustrate the hack or tip for fellow classmates.

Deliverables for instructor:

- Short essay (under 500 words) that describes the problem that the tip/hack helps to facilitate. Include ethical considerations that go along with this tip/hack.
- A hard copy of any on screen demonstration of the tip/hack.
- A works cited page where students acknowledge where they learned about this tip/hack.

CLASS CALENDAR: The class calendar/schedule can be found at <http://professorgrossman.com/schedule-hofstra-pr-100-fall-2015/>. Please check it regularly as it will be updated in real-time to reflect any needed changes.

REMIND SYSTEM: The instructor will be using the Remind system to alert the class to any schedule changes or class cancellations. You can choose to receive messages via text or email. To receive messages via text, text @hof-grossm to 81010. You can opt-out of messages anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @hofgrossm'. To receive messages via email, send an email to hofgrossm@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.