

Section Information: Section 002 (Fall 2009)

Course Name : JOUR 4460 Public Relations Communications (Jacobson)

Classroom

GAB 110

Class Meetings

Tuesday – 6:30 – 9:20 p.m.

Course Description

Success in PR communication rests on learning to manage ideas as well as possessing technological skills to ensure appropriately placed communications. Students will continue building skills that will increase their mastery of the PR process, blending technological and creative ability that will culminate in a PR campaign. The course places heavy emphasis on writing, along with appropriate writing for selected PR channels. (Prerequisite(s): JOUR major status; JOUR 3420)

Texts

1. Wilcox, Dennis L. *Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques*. 6th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2009.
2. Williams, Robin. *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice*. 3rd ed. Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press, 2008.
3. Kessler, Lauren, and McDonald, Duncan. *When Words Collide: A Media Writer's Guide to Grammar and Style*. 7th ed. Belmont, CA : Wadsworth, 2008.
4. The Associated Press. *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*. 44th ed. New York: Basic Books, 2009.
5. UNT class Blackboard
6. Selected Web sites

Course Objectives

Since 1969, the UNT Department of Journalism (Mayborn School of Journalism, effective Sept. 1, 2009) has been accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). This national accreditation also extends to the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, the only accredited professional master's program in Texas. About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the U.S. are accredited by ACEJMC. National accreditation enhances your education here because it certifies that the department and graduate institute adhere to many standards established by the council. Among these standards are student learning outcomes, covered by journalism courses in all sequences.

After taking JOUR 4460, each student will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of individuals and groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the PR profession.

- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes.
- Critically evaluate his/her own work for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the PR profession.

Section Instructor: Jacobson Linda

Contacting Professor Jacobson

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Journalism Requirements and Guidelines

Requirements: Each semester, you'll need to print your official transcript, highlighting all of the journalism courses that you have taken. You'll use this transcript to obtain class codes in the advising office before registering for classes. Students will not be allowed to retake a journalism course more than twice. Once you have failed a journalism course two times, then you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required pre-reqs according to your calendar year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven't taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your pre-reqs, please see an advisor.

For a journalism major to be enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000-level classes, you must have taken and passed the GSP test, all pre-major courses, and Math 1680, and also have applied for major.

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Academic Honesty

Introduction: When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, copy-right infringement, and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable.

Additional information: Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people's written words as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people's writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It's a firing offense in the professional world. In the Mayborn School of Journalism, students face a range of penalties for plagiarism (depending on the importance of the assignment): a grade of "F" on a minor assignment; a

request that the student drop the class; withdrawal of the student from the class, initiated by the professor; an "F" in the course; a referral to the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities; a notation on the student's transcript; and expulsion from the university. A combination of these penalties may also be used. If you need more information or have

questions about plagiarism, ask your nearest journalism professor, or visit the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Special Accommodations

The School of Journalism cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you have not registered with the ODA, please do so immediately, and notify me by e-mail of your request no later than Sept. 14.

Attendance

You are expected to attend and participate in each class meeting. Two absences in the course are the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem. If you miss three or four classes, 10 points will be taken off your final grade. If you miss five or more classes, you will be dropped from the course. Coming to class late or leaving early constitutes an absence for that day.

Class Protocol

Once in the classroom, you'll need to silence your cell phone, and keep it packed inside your purse or backpack. During class, you should not surf the Web or check e-mail; if you do so, I will ask you to leave the class, and the dismissal will count as an absence.

Each class you'll need to sign an attendance sheet; your failure to do so will constitute an absence whether you were present in the class or not.

Class Format

This course consists of lecture, discussion and lab exercises. It is writing intensive. I expect you to be ready to produce quality work. That means you will have read the assigned readings before coming to class and are ready to actively discuss or apply concepts from the readings. I'll post announcements, activities and Web links on the class Blackboard. Please be sure you check this area often.

In this course, you will:

- Practice applying good writing techniques and visual communications techniques to specific public relations' context
- Learn how to apply general design principles to your communications
- Create and present a public relations publicity campaign

As expected in a professional environment, deadlines are strictly observed. You can expect 12 online exercises, 12 written assignments, two exams, and one publicity campaign.

Evaluation

Blackboard exercises (12)	120 points
Writing assignments (12)	240 points
Exam 1	120 points
Exam 2	120 points
Publicity campaign	300 points

Grading System

820 points or higher of total possible points	A
720–819 points	B
620–719 points	C
520–619 points	D
Lower than 520 points	F

Evaluation Explanation

Blackboard exercises

Grammar, style and AP style, and design principles

You will have 12 assignments, and each assignment is worth 10 points. These assignments can be found on Blackboard, and will be timed and due by the closing posting time each Thursday.

Writing assignments

News release
Media list
Telephone pitch
Radio PSA
Print PSA
LinkedIn
Newsletter ed calendar
Twitter
Feature story (print)
Feature story (Web)
Newsletter
4460 wiki

You will have 12 writing assignments, and each writing assignment is worth 20 points. You will be graded as follows:

Content/key messages – 8 points
Style and grammar – 8 points
Design and format – 4 points

Be aware that if your assignment contains more than three grammar or AP style errors, you will receive 0 points for that section of the assignment.

All assignments must be word-processed in 12-point, according to the format in *The PR Style Guide: Formats for Public Relations Practice*, unless the assignment involves graphic design. You will have freedom of choice for font and layout; however, be aware that you will be graded according to the style you choose. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. You are not allowed to use a lab printer to print out your assignment; have a hardcopy in hand. Late assignments will drop one letter grade for each day, unless you have communicated with me prior to the due date about an extraordinary circumstance. No e-mail submission of papers is allowed. **Extensive Internet research is strongly discouraged for this class; library searches and academic journal/book reading are expected. Include endnotes for the background and feature stories.** During this course, save all your work on your computer through the end of the course.

You will be held to high professional standards in your writing as follows:

1. Content and message appeals: Your writing will be evaluated for organization of thought, strength of message, inclusion of the human element, persuasiveness, originality, and other content issues relevant to each assignment.
2. Grammar, style and format: *The Associated Press Stylebook* and *When Words Collide* will be your guide to writing. Your writing will be graded carefully for mechanical content and construction. Some examples of these are:
 - Misspellings, typographical errors or AP style mistakes
 - Improper heading format, use of difficult, unusual, big or dead words, awkward phrases, improper or other punctuation, long paragraphs or sentences, general sloppiness or lack of professionalism.
3. Originality: Your work must reflect your original ideas and existing facts. No form of academic dishonesty is tolerated. No matter how well you have done before, one incident

of academic dishonesty will have grave consequences on your college career. A typical example of plagiarism is a feature piece with minor modifications on a single news story you happen to find on the Web. **Always research more than enough and use multiple sources to discover your own ideas and story angle.**

News release – (two pages max.) Write a print news release covering information, as assigned.

Media list – Compile a targeted media list in Excel that contains 15 print journalists and 5 broadcast journalists.

Telephone pitch – Write a 30-second telephone pitch, and then pitch it, as assigned.

Radio PSA – Craft a 30-second PSA in the format used, as assigned.

Print PSA – Design a print PSA for newspaper, 1/4 page size, from the radio PSA you've created.

LinkedIn – Create a personal profile on LinkedIn that casts you as a new PR professional.

Newsletter ed calendar – Create a 3-month editorial calendar for a 4-page newsletter, as assigned.

Twitter – Create a personal Twitter account, and send tweets in a 48-hour window, as assigned.

Feature story (print) – Craft a feature story (not a personality profile), as assigned to you.

Feature story (Web) – Apply the Web format for the feature story you've crafted.

Newsletter – Design and write a 4-page newsletter from the editorial calendar you created.

4460 wiki – Create one page that covers the issue assigned to you on the class Wiki, and edit two other pages.

Exam 1

Wilcox chapters 5, 6 (partial), 7, 9 (partial), 10, 11, 12, 13, 16

The test will be multiple choice and will cover PR writing material covered to date (listed above) and PR writing material we've covered in class; the test is worth 120 points.

Exam 2

Kessler, McDonald chapters 1 – 12; AP Stylebook; Williams, chapters 1 – 7, pgs. 123 – 130, 139 - 142

The test will be multiple choice and will cover grammar, style and AP style, and design material covered in class (listed above); the test is worth 120 points.

Publicity Campaign

During the last six weeks of the class, you will be teamed with another person to create a publicity campaign for a client. Each team will “compete” to produce a unique campaign and materials for the same client; therefore, each team should work independently of other teams. This assignment will be worth 300 points, graded as follows:

Communications plan – 100

Tactics – 100

Timetables – 25

Budget – 25

Presentation – 75

These are the minimum requirements for the campaign:

Communications plan (100 points):

- Situation analysis
- Strategies
- Objectives
- Target publics
- Key messages
- Tactics
- Crisis plan for special event

Tactics (100 points):

- Print news release
- Media advisory, describing special event
- Organization backgrounder
- Photo shot or graphics to be used in campaign
- E-mail pitch
- Brochure or direct mail package

Timetables (25 points):

- Six-month planning timeline
- 24-hour event timeline

Budget (25 points):

- Budget list

Presentation (75 points):

- Visuals used
- How the campaign materials are packaged and presented
- Professional quality of campaign materials
- Professional persona
- Presented in allotted time (20 minutes)

Teams may choose to incorporate more tactics, which will earn the team an additional 10 points/per tactic. Each tactical material produced with three or more grammar or style errors will receive a 10-point deduction from the Tactics category of the campaign. Teams that do not produce the required minimum for each component of the campaign will receive 0 points for that component.

Syllabus

This class outline is subject to change; I will keep an updated version of the syllabus on the class Blackboard and announce any changes both there and in class. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up with changes in this syllabus and assignments.

- Sept. 1 – Introduction to course; be able to access Blackboard. I've got my press release, now what? (Wilcox, ch. 5 and 10; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 1); student information sheet
- Sept. 8 – Recognizing who's on the other side of the pitch (Wilcox, ch. 11 and ch. 6, pgs. 156 – 160; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 2); news release due.
- Sept. 15 – The I is not P. (Wilcox, ch. 12 and ch. 9, pgs. 215-222; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 3; Williams ch. 1-7); media list due.
- Sept. 22 – Joining the conversation (Wilcox, ch. 12, ch. 7, pgs. 171 – 173; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 4); phone pitch assignment; PSA (radio script) and print PSA due.
- Sept. 29 – Meet a workhorse (and then some!) (Wilcox, ch. 13; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 5; Williams, pgs. 139-142) LinkedIn due/4460 wiki begins.
- Oct. 6 – Write to be published (Wilcox, ch. 7; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 6; Williams, pgs. 123-126); Newsletter ed calendar due; Twitter assignment.
- Oct. 13 – Mailing your message (Wilcox, ch. 16; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 7); two feature stories (print and Web) due.
- Oct. 20 – Exam 1; Taking the first step and being proactive (Wilcox, ch. 18); 4-page newsletter due.
- Oct. 27 – Groups and intro of client publicity campaign; 4-page newsletter due (Kessler, McDonald, ch. 8); 4460 wiki due; draft communications plan due
- Nov. 3 – Mail out the message (Wilcox, ch. 16; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 9); draft blog due
- Nov. 10 – Organize it! (Wilcox, ch. 17; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 10)
- Nov. 17 – Four score and seven years ago, and other presentation tips (Wilcox, ch. 15; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 11); draft brochure/direct mail package due
- Nov. 24 – Did we measure up? (Wilcox, ch. 19; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 12)
- Dec. 1 – Exam 2
- Dec. 8 – Complete campaign materials and plan presentation
- Dec. 15 – Campaign presentations