

Journalism 5100
Problems in Public Relations Fall 2009
The Twitter hashtag for this course is #UNTJ5100

Instructor:

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Office Hours: As an adjunct, I don't have an office, so I won't have regular office hours. If you need to meet with me, make an appointment. I can meet you on campus in Denton or at UCD up to an hour before class time. If you're working in WebCT and notice that I'm online, invite me to chat. Otherwise, email me or call me.

COURSE GOALS:

- Develop student experience in strategic thinking and the analysis of factors that contribute to the decision making process in strategic public relations.
- Develop student experience in the oral, written, computer and new media skills necessary to success in 21st Century communications.
- Develop student accountability for all actions relating to the development of strategic communications, planning, issues management and branding.
- Simulate a real-life organizational atmosphere so students learn how to determine more than one solution for opportunities and problems that exist, and the value of examining incorrect solutions.
- Improve the student's ability to think critically and creatively.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Work closely with professionals to help achieve each student's career goals.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Disability Accommodation: The Mayborn School of Journalism cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodations to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you have not registered with ODA, please do so, and present your written accommodation request to me by the second class meeting.

Required Texts:

Putting the Public Back in Public Relations
Brian Solis and Dierdre Breakenridge
Upper Saddle River: FT Press, 2009

Study Guide for the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations

Universal Accreditation Board

New York, 2008

Downloadable free

at http://www.praccreditation.org/documents/APR_Study_Guide_First_Edition.pdf (152 pages long, should you care to print it out.)

Additional REQUIRED reading:

Blogs: Students are required to monitor and comment weekly on no fewer than 3 unique blogs throughout the semester.

- One blog will be assigned to you by your instructor
- One must be a business blog
- The third can be a blog on any subject you choose, preferably PR, marketing, social media, or mass media in general.
- There will be no duplication of blogs. So connect with each other and me during the first week to be sure you aren't following the same blogs.

Every week, post a brief summary of each blog and include the link, the name of the blog and blogger, and the date of the post you're reviewing if you want to get credit.

Include a critique of the blog's content or the blogger's style, the point being to encourage others to read the blog or to avoid it. Apply principles of PR that you are learning in class to your blog comments. If the blogger did not post that week, find another blog on the same topic. The entire post should be no more than 2-3 paragraphs long (pretend you're summarizing for the CEO), or in bullet points. Each student must also read and comment on at least two classmate posts. Online and classroom discussion about blog topics is encouraged. You will do three separate posts per week, one for each blog.

Twitter: You must follow your instructor's Twitter account (@samjb), the class Twitter account (@untj5100) and each of your classmates' Twitter accounts, which everyone is required to post in WebCT by the second class meeting. You'll also want to search #untj5100 regularly for relevant Tweets being shared by the class. One relevant Tweet per week is mandatory, but more than that will contribute to class participation. Anytime you want to Tweet or ReTweet something you think is of interest to the class, use the hashtag #untj5100. Participation in Twitter discussions will be considered as part of your class participation grade, but be mindful that we all appreciate quality over quantity.

Supplementary Articles I also have the annoying habit of finding articles, Web sites, blogs, etc. and sharing links to them with my colleagues via Twitter and Facebook. I will do the same for this class, via @untj5100 or #untj5100. Here's the deal: **If I "Tweet" it with the class hashtag, that's a hint that I'd like you to at least skim over it and be**

prepared to discuss it in class. (You can print it out and bring it with you if that's easier.) This is not required, but could enhance your class participation grade. Feel free to share info you find with your classmates and me via this same Twitter hashtag and account—information sharing goes both ways and we can all learn from each other. **If, however, I post an article in a discussion section of WebCT or email it directly to you, that's a pretty clear indication we WILL be discussing it** and your classmates and I would appreciate your knowledgeable input. All this last minute Tweeting and emailing is not to harass you, but a response to the fact that information about PR and business is moving at the speed of light, and to succeed in this field you need to have the fast-twitch fibers in your brain engaged at all times.

Optional, recommended texts (books every PR pro should have within reach for easy reference)

The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law

Norm. Goldstein, ed.

New York: Basic Books 2009

The AP Stylebook is also available online for \$25 a year, and includes frequent updates and style reminders based on breaking news. It has a useful interactive feature. <http://www.apstylebook.com> You can also follow it on Twitter.

Cutlip & Center's Effective Public Relations 10th Edition

Glen M. Broom.

Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, 2009

The Handbook of Strategic Public Relations & Integrated Communications

Clarke L. Caywood, ed.

New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997

(Yes, this book is 12 years old but contains much timeless and useful information.)

Semester Grading and Due Dates:

Assignment	Percent of grade	Due Date
Mandatory photo, resume, LinkedIn profile and Twitter handle uploaded to Resume/photos folder in WebCT	5%	11:55 pm Tues. 9/8
Weekly blog discussions (3 blog posts and comments on at least two classmates' posts)	15%	11:55 pm each Tuesday, beginning 9/8 and ending 12/8

Class participation (asking questions, contributing to the knowledge base, including SM interaction with class and PR pros)	10 %	Every week, whether class meets or not. Share readings, comments, or insights via Twitter #UNTJ5100.
Case Study Analyses: Analyze 2 PR case studies— one past, one contemporary—Provide a 2–3 page bullet summary of each and be prepared to present in class.	5% each case study	Case study #1 due Tuesday 9/22, discuss 9/23
5–7 page summary and critique of “Putting the Public Back in Public Relations.” This is not a book report, it is a critical summary and you should be citing other source material and/or your experience in PR to support your positions on this book.	15%	11:55 pm Tuesday 9/29
Case Study Analyses: Analyze 2 PR case studies— one past, one contemporary—Provide a 2–3 page bullet summary of each and be prepared to present in class.	5%	Case study #2 due Tuesday 10/13, discuss 10/14
Communications Plan Outline—Problem Statement and preliminary SWOT analysis for an actual client of your choice—this will be the basis for your semester project.	10%	Tuesday 10/20, 11:55 pm. Be prepared to outline and discuss in class on 10/21.
Ethics Test (in class)	10%	Wednesday, Oct. 28
Final Communications Plan—written and oral presentation to class	25%	Wed. Dec. 9 (uploaded materials by 11:55 pm Tuesday Dec. 8)

Your final grade in this course will be determined by how well you participate in class discussions, (live and online), your test score and how well you do on your assignments in comparison to everyone else in the class—kind of like real life.

All assignments are to be done in Microsoft Word format and then posted under Assignments in WebCT Vista. To gain access to this class go online to <https://ecampus.unt.edu> and enter your EUID that every student has as his/her identification number. **If you have any problems, call the Help Desk listed on the site during its working hours.**

All official class announcements, online discussions, grade postings, and additional readings will be posted in WebCT Vista, so familiarize yourself with it tomorrow. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK IT DAILY FOR SCHEDULE UPDATES, ADDITIONAL READINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.** I will not accept assignments via email or paper handed in during class (except for the ethics exam).

Do not post your assignments under discussions or send them to me via email—You will receive no credit if you do. Each assignment must be posted in the box under Assignments as well as attached as a Word file. All assignments are due by 11:55 pm on their due date. HOWEVER, do not wait until the last minute to post your assignments—both WebCT Vista and individual computer technologies periodically fail. Don't let procrastination keep you from earning credit for your hard work. Grades on assignments will be posted as quickly as humanly possible.

All written submissions, discussions and emails (with the exception of Tweets) will be in standard English. The AP Stylebook is the grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage guide for this class. All sources must be cited within the text or in footnotes at the end of the assignment. Sources must be cited in their entirety, whether a Web site, blog, book, magazine or journal article, or any other scholarly source, including the date of publication. Any omission of these citations will result in a lowered grade and possible investigation for plagiarism. When in doubt, cite. Don't press your luck.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: 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, fabrication, copyright infringement and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable. You are expected to conform to the university Student Code of Conduct: www.unt.edu/csrr. Please also read the statement on plagiarism that is posted on the home page for this course.

A note about Wikipedia. I use Wikipedia—I love it, it's a great tool, but it is not to be relied upon as the sole source for anything, especially in this class. If you use it to get started, great, but check the sources within Wikipedia as well as other sources online

and in the library (yes, there's a big building with books and journals in it on campus, you should visit it some time). Assignments written with sole reliance on Wikipedia will not be considered complete and will be graded accordingly.

CLASS ATTENDANCE REQUIRED: Because of the organization of this class, you are required to attend all face-to-face class meetings. We meet once a week, so missing a class means you missed a week of class. I might give you an excused absence upon a written explanation well in advance of the class meeting. The amount of information covered in this class warrants your perfect attendance. Besides, you might learn something.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY: This class is a no cell-phone, iPhone, Blackberry PDA, texting, emailing, WiFi or otherwise wireless communications zone. If you are using your laptop to take notes, fine, but if you can't hold off emailing and texting your friends for a couple of hours at a time, you don't need to be in this class and I will ask you to leave. We will have guest speakers, and they deserve your undivided attention. Your instructor and the classmates with whom you are learning and sharing information also deserve your undivided attention. If a phone rings in class, I reserve the right to confiscate it until the end of the class and give you a zero for class participation that night. **EXCEPTION to this rule is if you are on call for your employer and notify me in writing well in advance of each class for which you are on call.** Another exception to the rule would be if, during class discussion we need to research a topic on the spot, then I will authorize it. My phone will be on vibrate in case of any emergencies.

Class Schedule

Topics are subject to change pending availability of guest speakers. Changes in class topics will not affect the due date of assignments.

September 2	Administrivia, definitions, history, economic & political setting, the environment for PR, what PR is and what it isn't.
September 9	Communications theories & practices, KSAs needed for the practice of PR, business literacy
September 16	Media Relations: Confirmed guest speakers: April Foran, Director of Communications, Parkland Hospital; Beth Ann Black, Independent Consultant
September 23	Social media integration Guest Speaker Steve Lee, President & CEO Quicksilver Interactive
September 30	Discuss Solis book, Discuss PR Ethics in a new age of media
October 7	Public Relations Research and Planning--Rand LaVonn, APR (Atmos Energy) and Bill Kula, APR (Verizon Communications)

October 14	Discuss second case study, Research & Measurement Guest speakers TBA
October 21	Discuss communications plan outlines, current issues in PR and media
October 28	Ethics test, Catch-up
November 4	Non-profit PR -speakers TBA
November 11	Crisis communications—Rusty Cawley, APR, Communications Coordinator, Integrative Center for Homeland Security, Texas A&M; Ken Capps, APR, DFW Airport
November 18	Issues Management—speakers TBA
November 25	No class—Happy Thanksgiving (but read your blogs)
December 2	International Public Relations
December 9	Project Presentations in class

There is no final exam in this class.