

Syllabus and Course Outline
Public Relations (MBA 644-50)
University of Indianapolis, MBA, Fall 2005

3 Credit Hours

Wednesdays, 5:45 – 8:45 p.m. (10 minute break at approx. 7:15 p.m.)

U of I, Good Hall Rm. 104

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(I do not have a U Indy E-mail account)

No office hours — appointments by arrangement*

* A campus mail drop has been assigned in the MBA office so that individuals may leave messages, however, it is expected that the campus mail will only be checked once a week just before class. Telephone or e-mail on the internet are the best methods for reaching the instructor. Someone is in the St. Francis Community Relations office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. weekdays, the home phone is attached to an answering machine and e-mail will be checked daily.

Textbook: Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice
By Dan Lattimore, Otis Baskin, Suzette T. Heiman, Elizabeth Toth &
James K. Van Leuven
McGraw-Hill, 2004

The text will be supplemented by articles and other materials handed out in class.

Nature of the Course

The course will include a combination of lecture and practical exercises including student presentations. In addition, guest lecturers from appropriate specialty fields will provide for broadened perspectives.

Purpose of the Course

The course will introduce the student to the basic elements and principles of public relations. The student will be able to execute basic public relations research, develop a basic public relations plan, implement components of that plan and evaluate the results. A variety of facets in the field will be explored including ethics and legal considerations, measurement and assessment methods, and career possibilities.

Goals and Objectives

I. All students receiving a passing grade in the class will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the basic four-step process of public relations as well as some knowledge of the history and ethics of public relations.

- a. Students will be able to complete rudimentary public relations research including isolation of segmented audiences or publics.
- b. Students will be able to create a basic public relations plan showing applicable publics, tools to be used to reach those publics, expected outcomes as a result of the public relations effort and a methodology for evaluation.
- c. Students will be able to show basic implementation skills including -
 - writing of a news release
 - developing a media “pitch” letter/ query letter
 - writing of a public service announcement for radio or TV
 - developing a special events checklist
 - further, students will be able understand and identify through evaluation of case studies a range of skills necessary to the public relations profession
- d. Students will be able to develop an evaluation tool for a public relations activity.
- e. Students will be able to recognize names and major contributions of key historical figures in public relations.
- f. Students will be able to identify basic ethical issues inherent in specific public relations cases and be able to identify an “appropriate” course of action for a public relations practitioner in those specific cases.

II. Students will be able to analyze public relations cases and identify the basic concepts and processes at work in those cases.

Grades

Letter grades will be awarded on the basis of an average of grades earned during the semester and weighted according to the following criteria:

2 exams @ 200 points each	400 points
Term paper, individual	300 points
Short assignments: evaluation tool, News Release, Query Letter, checklist, etc.	100 points
PR at Work papers (20 points each)	100 points
Class participation, group work , exercises & case studies, attitude etc.	100 points

Attendance will be evaluated independently and students will be appropriately penalized for missing classes.

Numerical scores will be given for each assignment with a total of 1,000 points possible for the course. These scores convert to the U of I grading system as illustrated below:

A	900 - 1000	= 4.0
B+	870 - 899	= 3.75
B	840 - 869	= 3.5
B-	800 - 839	= 3.0
C+	770 - 799	= 2.75
C	740 - 769	= 2.5
C-	700 - 739	= 2.0
F	below 700	= 0.0

Work not done on time = 0 points for that assignment.

Exams

Exams are to be taken individually. Each will include essay questions, multiple guess.. er.. multiple choice, and a few true-false and fill in the blank questions. You will be held responsible for all reading **whether or not we discuss it**. You will also be held responsible for all information discussed in class, any handouts **and any remarks of guest speakers**.

Some material on the exams may be new, asking for solutions and thought processes similar to things discussed in class or found in readings. **Exams are scheduled on Monday, October 24th and Monday, December 12th.**

The Individual Term Paper: (300 points)

You will create a PR campaign for a “major” organization. By “major” - we mean an organization that can provide basic sample and research tools such as an annual report, news releases, advertising, articles in the media, etc. The project, when complete, will be at least 10 to 15 typewritten, double spaced, pages not including graphs, charts and sample tools. A 15-minute oral presentation to the class during the last two weeks of the semester will be part of the grade. **A one to two page type-written proposal outlining your project is due September 19th. The paper itself will be due December 5th (Assuming we have fewer than 12 students in the class, otherwise the paper will be due a week earlier, November 28th)**

The format of the written report should include (but is not limited to) the following key components of the four-step process of public relations.

Research

- Discover the facts crucial to the campaign: about the organization, the industry in which it operates, and about the “situation” which necessitates a public relations campaign.
- Identify and justify methods of quantitative research used to gather opinion, image, attitudinal, and marketing information.
- Identify the problem in statement or narrative form.

Analysis (planning, alternatives, adaptation, objective setting)

- Segment (target) and select publics in order of importance
- Specify measurable objectives for each of the important publics; level of achievement, behavioral outcome, public, time frame, etc.
- List alternative strategies and possible tactics for achieving each objective
- List resources available for implementing the several strategies

Communication (response, program, implementation)

- Select from the several publics the one or two most important to be reached to “solve” the organization problem.
- Select and adapt from listed alternative strategies the one(s) most appropriate for achieving the objective(s) with the selected publics.
- Determine a unifying theme as the foundation for all campaign messages, events, etc.
- Design the messages, events, etc. - including spokesperson
- Select and/or design the media for carrying the messages including graphics, drawings, storyboards, as appropriate)
- Develop a calendar which structures the campaign including media deadlines
- Develop a budget for each objective (including advertising placement and production cost, printing and labor)

Evaluation (effectiveness)

- determine quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting “effectiveness” data during the campaign.
- plan for the organization’s analysis and interpretation of the data.

The oral presentation should summarize the campaign for the rest of the class.

PR at Work

During the course, you will prepare five (5) short papers examining PR at work. Each paper will examine a current example of PR work, and is worth 20 points. The papers will be at least one full page in length but shall not exceed 3 full pages. The topics may be of the student's own choosing. These will include an examination of such things as a media relations activity resulting in a broadcast story or print story; a look at an organizational publication (internal or external); a grass roots political activity, a special event, a crisis event, an employee communication program or activity, a look at an annual report, or examination of a consumer relations activity or program, etc.. Each paper must examine a different PR activity. (for instance, a student can't examine a media relations story every week, even if the stories are different). These activities will be discussed briefly in class. Due dates for these papers are:

- Monday, September 12th
- Monday, October 3rd
- Monday, October 17th
- Monday, November 7th
- Monday, November 21st

Evaluation tool, News release, query letter, public service announcement

During the course, students will be required to turn in an evaluation tool, sample news release, sample query letter and sample public service announcement. These may be tied to a specific current event, guest speaker remarks, or even the student's own individual project or "real work." **at the discretion of the instructor.** These will be tied to readings or chapters discussed. Tentatively these assignments are as follows:

DUE DATES:

- 1) Short activity evaluation tool, Due Monday, September 19th
- 2) News release - Monday, October 10th
- 3) Special Event Checklist – Monday, October 31st
- 4) Letter (pitch letter or letter to legislator) – Monday, November 14th
- 5) Final "tool" – Public service announcement, radio script or tool of choice- Monday, November 28th

Participation

The text is the basis of class discussion. Read the assignment before coming to class. Knowledge of the reading will improve your understanding of the lecture or discussion and prove useful in tackling case problems. Class participation will be observed and will be considered in the determination of the final grade. Student attitude, demonstrated ability to work with the group, enthusiasm, etc. will all be taken into account in this area.

Assignment Schedule/Calendar

Monday, August 29 th Class 1	Course Orientation/Overview, Public Relations Defined; Lecture: The Nature of Public Relations, The History of Public Relations Activities: Introductions, discussions on “what is PR” Case study discussion: Doing Public Relations – pp 18 – 19; Reading: Chapters 1 - 4 for next class, September 12 th Assignment: PR at Work, assignment 1
Monday, September 5 th	LABOR DAY — No Class
Monday, September 12 th Class 2	Review: Nature & History of PR; Lecture: Theoretical basis for public relations and Law and Ethics; Case Study discussion: Citizens to Stop the Coal Trains, pp 60 – 63 Case Problem discussion: & Spotlights/Critical Incidents Case Study, pp. 81 – 87; Reading: Chapters 5 & 6 for next class Assignment: PR activity evaluation tool Prepare Individual Term Project Proposal DUE: PR at Work, assignment 1
Monday, September 19 th Class 3	Review: Theoretical basis for public relations and Law and Ethics; Lecture: The PR Process, Research and Public Relations Planning Case Problem discussion: & Spotlights; Interview w/Steve Erickson, Case Study: University Blood Drive, p. 110; Case Study: Cornados – pp. 128 - 130 Activities: submit individual term project proposal for organizational case study - bring in contact name, address, phone number and title Activities: Discuss Individual Term paper topics Reading: Chapters 7 & 8 for Oct. 3rd class Assignment; PR at Work, assignment 2 – due Oct. 3 DUE: PR activity evaluation tool
Monday, September 26 th Class 4	FRED in FRANCE – Guest Instructor – Katherine Coble, MBA, Vice President, Borshoff-Johnson-Mathews Public Relations Reading: Review Chapters 1 - 8 for the next class Assignment: PR at Work, assignment 2

Monday, October 3rd Class 5	Lecture: Action & Communication, Evaluating PR Effectiveness Review: Chapters 1 – 8, discussion Reading: Chapters 9 & 10 for next week Discussion and secondary lecture: PR on the Net Handouts on Writing for the Wired World Assignments: Write a News Release for next week DUE: PR at Work, assignment 2
Monday, October 10 th Class 6	Review: PR Process – Research, Planning, Implementation & Evaluation, plus PR on the Net Guest Speaker # 2: Lecture: Media Relations and Employee Communications Reading: Review Chapters 1 - 10 for next week Assignment: PR at Work, assignment 3 DUE: News Release
Monday, October 17 th Class 7	Review Chapters 1 – 10 for Mid Term Exam next week Reading: Review Chapters 1 - 10 for next week's exam Assignment: Prepare a special events checklist for Oct. 31 st DUE: PR at Work, assignment 3
Monday, October 24 th Class 8	Mid Term Exam Guest Proctor for Exam – Fred in Miami at PRSA National Conference
Monday, October 31 st Class 9	Lecture: Chapters 11 & 12, Community Relations and Consumer Relations and Marketing Activities: Discussion – What they were talking about at the PRSA National Conference Assignment: PR at Work, assignment 4 DUE: Special Events Checklist
Monday, November 7 th Class 10	Lecture: Chapters 13 & 14, Financial Relations & Government Relations/Public Affairs, areas of practice Activities: Assignment: Write a PR letter – a pitch letter or letter to a legislator for next week DUE: PR at Work, assignment 4
Monday, November 14 th Class 11	Lecture: Chapters 15 & 16, PR in Nonprofit and Corporate settings, areas of practice Activities: Discussion of Individual presentations & term papers; Assignment: Final PR at Work, assignment 5 DUE: Pitch Letter or letter to a legislator
Monday, November 21 st	Lecture: Chapter 17, Trends in PR

Class 12	<p>Activities: Discussion of Individual presentations & term papers;</p> <p>Assignment: Final “tool” – PSA, radio script or “tool of choice”</p> <p>DUE: PR at Work, assignment 5</p>
Monday, November 28 th Class 13	<p>Review – Chapters 1 – 17</p> <p>Activities: Discussion of Individual presentations & term papers;</p> <p>DUE: Final “tool” – PSA, radio script or “tool of choice”</p> <p>Final Exam- Comprehensive, emphasis on chapters 9 - 17</p>
Monday, December 5 th Class 14	<p>Campaign Individual Presentations,</p> <p>DUE: Final “tool” – PSA, radio script or “tool of choice”</p> <p>Review for Final Exam - Comprehensive, but emphasis on chapters 11 - 17</p>
Monday, December 12 th Class 15	<p>Final Exam- Comprehensive, emphasis on chapters 9 - 17</p>