

Public Relations 241: Public Relations Theory and Practice

Fall 2015

M,W,F 11:00 – 11:50

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Office Hours: Daily from 1:00 – 2:00

Course Description:

In this class you will learn about the theory and practice of public relations, how public relations operates in organizations, its impact on publics and its functions in society. You will study the professional development of the field; concepts, issues, and principles in the practice; and models and theories guiding the practice. You will apply course materials to public relations program planning and management by working in a group on a strategic planning project.

For those planning public relations careers, this course provides a foundation for the public relations major. The course also meets the needs of those planning other professional and managerial careers that require an understanding of public relations concepts and management practices.

Required Text: Glen M. Broom and Bey-Ling Sha, *Cutlip and Center's Effective Public Relations*, 11th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2013)

Course Objectives:

The actual practice of Public Relations involves the planning and implementing of a wide variety of communication activities. It also includes an assortment of duties related to the counseling of management. This course will introduce you to the basics of a range of PR activities. This course will build on your previous academic training, as well as your life experiences, and will require that you continue to hone, refine, and improve your critical and strategic sensibilities so as to become a successful and ethical PR practitioner.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:

First exam	50 pts
Second exam	50 pts
Quizzes & Focus Questions 9 @10pts each	90 pts
Case studies & class activities	TBD
Current events summary	20 pts
Final Project presentation	100 pts

Readings, quizzes & focus question: you are assigned to read 1 - 2 chapters per week. Either a quiz or a set of focus question are due each Wednesday prior to class time as indicated on the schedule. A couple of the quizzes and focus questions are a combination of two chapters which is also indicated on the schedule. The quizzes are questions directly from the week's reading assignments and are designed to help you interact with and process the information. Each quiz consists of 10 multiple choice questions worth 1 pt each. Focus questions are open ended questions that you need to answer and

defend in your own words. Each quiz and/or focus question set is worth 10 pt each.

Case Studies: we will complete a series of case studies and other classroom activities that are worth points. The exact number of these will depend on how we progress through the semester.

Current events summary: Paying attention to current events is not only an important part of being an engaged citizen but also a critical component of being an effective public relations professional. To help get you into the habit, you will be assigned a week for which you are responsible for following socially relevant news and current events. Each Friday those assigned that week will provide a summary and lead a short discussion of the week's socially relevant events that occurred locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

PR analysis project presentation: the details of the assignment are provided on a separate assignment sheet included at the end of this syllabus.

Classroom Citizenship and Civility:

Each student is a citizen in this classroom and, as such, each student-citizen has a responsibility to the others in the classroom and each student-citizen has the right to have expectations of the others in the classroom. Everyone has the responsibility to be civil in the classroom and everyone has the right to expect that others behave with civility. To be 'civil' means that you consider those around you and work to maintain a positive learning environment. You will see that many of the class policies noted below help to create a civil classroom.

Class Policies:

- **Late Assignments:** An assignment will not be accepted late unless you provide documentation that proves that the tardiness is due to an emergency situation. Printer problems, computer problems, lost thumb drives are not emergency situations.
- **Communication:** Email is an official means of communication at Monmouth College. You are responsible for checking your MC email regularly. I may need to get information to you by way of email so it is important that you check your email on a daily basis. Email is also the best way to communicate with me!
- **Attendance:** Your participation in this course is essential; as a result, so is attendance. Attendance is taken at the start of each class period. For each absence over the 3rd you will lose 50 points from your semester total. You are allowed to miss 3 class periods without penalty. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences—it is assumed that when you miss class, you have a good reason for doing so. Your three absences are to be used for the inevitable doctor's visits, illnesses, sport events, court appointments, and funerals that may come up during the semester. An absence is an absence; use them with care. Extraordinary circumstances will be dealt with on a one-to-one basis as needed. Documentation may need to be provided in such cases.

Attendance means that you are physically and mentally present in class. You are not mentally present and cannot be engaged in the class if you are, for example, texting, preparing for another class, resting/sleeping, or checking your email. This inattentive behavior will be noted (2 such notes = 1 absence).

According to the 2014-15 college catalog, “When a student’s absences become excessive in the judgment of an instructor, the instructor may require that the student explain or receive permission for any further absences. This requirement is called “no-cut status.” The instructor notifies the student, the student’s advisor and the associate dean of academic affairs of the decision. Students who miss further classes without valid explanation or permission may be dismissed from the course with an F” (p. 10).

No matter the reason, when you are not present in class, you must contact a peer in the class or me to learn what was covered during the class and to learn what is due for the next class.

- **Class Conduct:** Every person in a class plays a role in shaping the classroom climate. I aim to help us collectively shape a classroom that has a healthy climate. The healthy classroom is one where people communicate with respect, share meaningful information, and collaborate with the understanding that everyone in the classroom is interdependent. A healthy classroom is one where intellectual curiosity, hard work, and academic excellence are valued. In order to create a positive classroom environment, please:
 - ✓ Do not use texting devices in class. Doing so will be noted.
 - ✓ Do not disrupt classroom activities by chatting when others are speaking, arriving late or leaving early
 - ✓ Do not sleep or rest with your head down in class. Doing so will be noted.
 - ✓ Participate meaningfully in classroom discussions and activities
 - ✓ Come to class prepared and ready to apply or discuss material you were assigned to read
 - ✓ Share your concerns about the course with me
 - ✓ Respect each other by honoring each person’s unique voices and, when you do disagree, communicate that disagreement in a mature and civil manner.
 - ✓ Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, or other exclusionary language that alienates members of our campus and classroom communities.

Course Expectations

In order to manage your time outside of class effectively, you should anticipate

- a couple of hours per week devoted to reading between 30 - 45 pages of material,
- a weekly quizzes that is to be completed outside of class
- various case studies or other homework activities
- a couple of hours per week spent following socially relevant current events
- the time necessary to research and analyze the PR activities of an organization.

In all you should plan to devote 3-4 hours per week to preparing for this class.

Academic Honesty:

In order for an academic community to thrive, members of that community must be able to trust the sincerity of its members. The very integrity of a college is grounded in academic honesty. One form of academic dishonesty that can undermine this integrity is *plagiarism*, intentionally or unintentionally copying the words or ideas from another source without giving that source credit.

Plagiarism is claiming as your own work done by another person. Turning in work written partially or wholly by someone else—whether a friend, roommate, web-site “expert” or the author of a book— is plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism include submitting a text:

- written by someone else as your own;
- written by means of inappropriate collaboration
- written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors;
- purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet;
- that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

Refer to the current *Scots Guide* for a detailed explanation of Monmouth College's academic honesty philosophy and procedures for handling cases of academic dishonesty. Do not hesitate to consult with me if you have questions about academic honesty.

Schedule

Following are assigned readings from the text.

M,W,F

Week	Topic / Reading	Assignment Due
Week 1 Aug 24	Introduction to class Reading: Ch 1 Intro to PR	Quiz ch 1 due Wednesday
Week 2 Aug 31	Ch 2 Practitioners of Public Relations Ch 3 Organizational setting	Quiz Ch 2&3 due Wednesday
Week 3 Sept 7	Ch 5 Professionalism& Ethics Ch 6 Legal Considerations	FQ Ch 5&6 due Wednesday
Week 4 Sept 14	Ch 7 Theoretical Underpinnings	FQ Ch 7 due Wednesday
Week 5 Sept 21	Reading: Ch 8 Communication Theories and Public opinion	Quiz Ch 8 due Wednesday
Week 6 Sept 28	Ch 9 Internal Relations	Quiz Ch 9 due Wednesday
Week 7 Oct 12	Ch 10 Media Relations Fall Break Begins – No class Friday	Quiz Ch 10 due Wednesday
Week 8 Oct 19	Fall Break – No class Monday Ch 11 Defining the PR problem Ch 12 Planning & Programming	Quiz Ch 11 & 12 due Wednesday
Week 9 Oct 26	Ch 13 Taking Action & Communicating Ch 14 Evaluating the Program	Quiz Ch 13&14 due Wednesday
Week 10 Nov 2	Ch 15 Business & Industry	
Week 11 Nov 9	Ch 16 Government & Politics	
Week 12 Nov 16	Ch 17 Military and Public Affairs	
Week 13 Nov 23	Ch 18 Nonprofits & NGOs THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASS Wed & Fri	Project presentations
Week 14 Nov 30	Ch 19 Health Care	Project presentations
Week 15 Dec 7	Ch 20 Education	Project presentations
Week 16 Dec 16	Final Exam	

PR Analysis Project Presentation

Select one category of organization to study. Your choices are business, industry, government, political, military, nonprofit, non-governmental organization, health care, or education. You should become an expert on this particular category of public relations work by applying what we have learned throughout the semester to analyzing the PR work of an organization within your category. You should choose an organization that has a web presence and gather the necessary information for your analysis from their website and other internet sources as necessary. During the last 3 weeks of the semester, you will present your analysis to the class. Your presentation should include at least 1 PowerPoint slide discussing each of the following:

1. The category of PR your organization fits into & how that category is unique from the others.
2. A description of your organization. What does it do and why? Who are their unique publics? How is it likely impacted by media, social media, and globalization.
3. Contextual / situational factors that impact your organization (include public opinion / reputation, history of the organization, and relevant current events).
4. Rhetorical strategies used to create and maintain the organization's identity. Include examples.
5. Analysis of at a press release (or some other PR artifact) published on their website. Discuss whether the artifact addresses identity, issue, risk, or crisis. Identify the rhetorical strategies used and evaluate the likely effectiveness of those strategies.

Make sure you provide examples (evidence from the text) to support all of your claims. Examples might be textual or visual.