



ACS 413

Case Studies in Public Relations

Winter 2022-2023

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This is an online, asynchronous course. The syllabus, course materials, course assignments, grades, announcements, etc. will be posted on Blackboard. You must have an electronic device with reliable Internet access, you must have a working knowledge of Blackboard and its features, and you must regularly check Blackboard and your SIUE email account. Remember: the only ways I can communicate with you are via Blackboard and via SIUE email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is an *upper level seminar* focusing on the role of strategic problem solving and critical thinking in the practice of public relations. You will be exposed to a wide variety of public relations scenarios and the manner in which PR professionals deal with problems and opportunities by studying real PR cases. Your readings contain real-life cases that will allow you to think through actual PR issues. You will build a knowledge base about the history and modern practice of public relations by reading about important public relations cases and engaging in group discussions. Learning objectives include:

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this class, the students will be able:

1. To use public relations theories and concepts to gain a better understanding of the analysis of public perceptions, attitudes and behavior.
2. To understand how PR concepts and theories can be applied to “real world” cases and problems.
3. To be aware of the application of research methods to strategic planning and campaigns.
4. To analyze public relations case studies within the context of group discussions, focusing on seeing patterns, identifying problems, and highlighting successful strategies and tactics.
5. To be aware of the key elements of a public relations campaign and how it relates to the RACE (Research, Action, Communication, Evaluation) model of public relations.
6. To understand the application and importance of ethics in analyzing cases and problems in public relations.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Required:

Swann, P. (2020). *Cases in Public Relations Management* (3rd edition). New York: Routledge.

Blackboard readings: All of the other required readings will be posted to Blackboard.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

SPC 213 is a necessary preparatory course for this class. If you wish to make the case that you have taken an equivalent to this course at another university, you will need to present documentation, such as an official course syllabus. We will also apply concepts, skills and theories learned in SPC 313, 315, 430 and 329 to PR cases.

Important Information for ALL SPC Majors

Track	Courses	Prerequisites
Interpersonal	SPC 421 & 422	SPC 330
	SPC 424	SPC 201, 323, 329, 330, 421, 422, & 434 (200 can be concurrent)
Public Relations	SPC 313, 315, & 413	SPC 213
	SPC 414 & 415	SPC 200, 213, 313, 315, 329, & 330
Corporate & Organizational	SPC 403	SPC 203
	SPC 409	SPC 200, 203, 329, 330, & 403

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

This is an upper-division for public relations students. I present cases for you to discuss, problems for you to solve, and questions for you to consider. Rather than “lecturing” or giving you my opinions or answers, I ask you to think through the cases and offer your own critical analysis. You can expect from me enthusiasm for and competence in the subject matter, as well as an open, participatory, and respectful online class format. I expect you to follow instructions carefully, initiate and participate in lively and productive online discussions via our class discussion board, and fully engage the readings.

Emphasis in all public relations courses is placed on accuracy of content and writing mechanics and style. The quality of your writing is of *paramount* importance, particularly in an online class where all your work is in written form. Failure to follow directions on an assignment will result in a significantly lowered grade. Written work must demonstrate good writing style and execution. Allowing ample time for the revision process is one way to improve your writing skills. Visiting the SIUE Writing Center is another resource at your disposal to improve your writing.

COURSE POLICIES:

Participation

Active participation is essential for this course. This includes completing all readings and assignments, as well as posting your assignments and engaging in discussions through the Blackboard platform. When you submit an assignment, it is your duty to review what you have submitted by reading the post and opening any attachments to make sure they are the correct version of the document and confirming that they have been successfully submitted.

This course is asynchronous, meaning there are no mandatory scheduled meeting times. All work is written, and all discussions are asynchronous via the discussion board. All work for the week is due each week by NOON on Sunday.

Deadlines

Students are responsible for doing work in due time. All assignments must be submitted on Blackboard by the deadline for full credit. If you have technical difficulties in posting an assignment under its designated link on Blackboard, be sure to email it to the professor ahead of the deadline. Late assignments will be accepted up to 24 hours after their due dates but will incur a late assignment penalty of 50%. Assignments submitted after 24 hours will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Integrity

If you use the ideas, words, or graphics of others, identify the source of those materials. Also, merely restating another individual's ideas in different words does not make the ideas yours. Proper documentation requires a bibliography of any outside texts you have consulted including both traditional sources and on-line sources. The absence of such documentation constitutes plagiarism – a serious academic and professional offense. According to the University Rules of Student Conduct, any form of cheating will result in a failing grade for this course and will be submitted for university action.

Student Civility

Student civility includes appropriate language and behavior in the online classroom environment (such as respect for your peers and the professor, as well as for the diversity of opinions and standpoints). Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and its Department of Speech Communication will not tolerate the disruption of a class or discourtesy to or harassment of anyone. According to the University Rules of Student Conduct, violations of student civility and class decorum will have consequences that can range from a failing grade to removal from the class.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please go to Disability Support Services (DSS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. DSS is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270; you may contact them to make an appointment by calling (618) 650-3726 or sending an email to disabilitysupport@siue.edu. Please visit the DSS website located online at www.siue.edu/dss for more information.

Course Evaluation

Near the end of the course you will be asked to complete a departmental course evaluation questionnaire inviting your opinions about the course and how it is taught. Your honest and constructive feedback is valued by the Department of Speech Communication and the professor. The course evaluation questionnaire will be administered online, in such a way as to ensure your confidentiality. The professor will not have access to the information on the evaluation until after grades have been turned in at the end of the semester.

Graduate Students

If this course is being taken by a graduate student for graduate credits, the university requires that student to complete an additional assignment. I require my students complete an additional case study, with theoretical application in order to earn graduate credit. Please see Blackboard for more information about this assignment.

GRADING STANDARDS:

Discussion Board Posts (300 Points)

I will post 6 threads in a discussion forum for each week and you need to respond to every question in all 6 threads. Feel free to comment on classmates' posts, but you are required to respond to all questions in all 6 threads each week. Each thread post should be a minimum of **200 words in length and must quote the book at least once, citing page number**. Avoid responses that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience. Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray). Try to use quotes from the articles that support your postings. Include page numbers when you do that. Build on others' responses to create threads. Bring in related prior knowledge (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.). Use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.). 3 weeks @ 100 points per week= 300 points.

Case Study Analyses (Midterm @ 50 points, Final @ 50 points)

To help you engage critically with case studies in public relations, this assignment will require you to connect concepts from the course materials with real-life public relations campaigns. You will also be assigned a public relations case to reflect on and answer questions about. Students will post their Midterm and Final Case Study Analyses under designated threads on Blackboard. The completed case study questions will be due by 11:59 a.m. (noon) on Sunday on the second and third week.

Assignment	Points
Discussion Board Posts	300
Midterm Case Study Analysis	50
Final Case Study Analysis	50
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	400 (graduate students complete an additional assignment worth 50, for total of 450)

GRADING PROCEDURES:

Students' grades will be based on the following scale:

A = for outstanding work that applied effectively concepts, techniques and skills learned in class to demonstrate excellent understanding and analysis of cases. Plus used outside sources.

B = for work that has minor flaws, but that provides clear evidence of preparation, learning, and good understanding and analysis of cases. Work meets expectations but needs minor improvements.

C = for work that could be improved, but shows average understanding and analysis of cases. Work meets expectations but needs major improvements.

D = for work that minimally indicates understanding and analysis of cases. Work does not meet expectations.

F = for work that is very sloppy, incomplete, or work that indicates no understanding of the analysis of cases.

To determine a letter grade for assignments, take the amount of points earned and divide it by the total points possible for the assignment, then move the decimal point 2 places to the right to calculate your percentage. Ex: if an assignment is worth 15 points and you earn 13 points: $13 \div 15 = 0.8666666$. Move the decimal point 2 places to the right = 86.6. Rounded up = 87%. Based on the grading scale listed above, 13 out of 15 (87%) would be a "B."

Final grades for the class are calculated as follows:

360-400 points = A

320-359 points = B

280-319 points = C

240-279 points = D

Under 239 points = F

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Please read the daily course schedule to determine the order of the readings, activities, and assignments.

Changes to the schedule may be made at the instructor's discretion and if circumstances require. Any changes will be announced in class. It is the student's responsibility to note these changes when announced.

WEEK	TOPIC	ACTIVITY	All assignments due by NOON on Sunday:
1 12/19-12/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Brief Introduction to Public RelationsEthics and the LawCorporate Social ResponsibilityMedia Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">6 Discussion Board PostsRead Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4	12/25
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">6 Discussion Board Posts	1/1

12/26-1/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activism • Consumer Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 5, 6, 7 • Midterm Case Study Analysis 	
3 1/2-1/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment & Leisure • Community Relations • Cultural and Other Considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Discussion Board Posts • Read Chapters 8, 9, 10 • Final Case Study Analysis 	1/8