

# Media Relations & Event Management

Oklahoma City University  
Spring 2015  
MCPR 3013-01 - 3 credit hours  
9-9:50 a.m. MWF  
Walker Center, Room 122

## **Professor**

Kenna Griffin

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*I have an open-door policy and am happy to discuss public relations with you at any opportunity. You do not have to schedule an appointment to discuss course-related matters with me. If you want to guarantee an uninterrupted one-on-one that will take longer than 15 minutes, I encourage you to schedule an appointment to ensure that we can provide one another our undivided attention.*

## **Required Texts & Course Materials**

Allen, J. (2009). *Event Planning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Mississauga, Ontario: Wiley & Sons.

Howard, C.M. and Mathews, W.K. (2013). *On Deadline: Managing Media Relations*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Materials posted in the course Facebook group, which I will invite you to join.

*Note: Others may be added during the semester.*

## **Recommended Texts**

Good public relations practitioners (and citizens) are well-informed news consumers.

You should read *The Oklahoman* ([newsok.com](http://newsok.com)) and *The Campus* every day ([www.mediaocu.com](http://www.mediaocu.com)). I recommend that you get into the habit of reading at least one daily metropolitan newspaper and a weekly news magazine. I also recommend that you watch at least one televised newscast each day.

In addition, I recommend that you visit and participate in discussions on my media blog, [www.profkrg.com](http://www.profkrg.com). The site acts as a resource for students and an open forum for discussion of trends in our profession. You can follow the blog on Twitter @profkrg. You also may follow my blog and other industry news on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ProfKRG](http://www.facebook.com/ProfKRG).

Responsible citizens are avid news consumers. Information is the key to a democratic society. Develop the habit of daily news consumption now if you haven't already.

## Course Description

This course will introduce and familiarize you with the techniques and practical skills necessary for a public relations professional to build relationships with media and to plan and produce effective special events. The media relations portion of the course will focus on understanding the role of media and the best practices for working successfully with media practitioners. Lectures and assignments will focus on identifying and creating news within and organization, developing media tools, training spokespeople, hosting press conferences, developing media relations programs, and working with media during times of crisis. The event management portion of the course is designed to show you all of the aspects of planning and producing special events, from developing an initial concept to creating a budget and actually executing the event. Lectures, class discussions, practical exercises, projects, and assigned readings will be used to achieve all of these course functions.

## Grading

I will attempt to grade all class assignments and return them to you within a week of submission. You are encouraged to visit my office to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your grades on individual assignments or in the course as a whole. You are strongly discouraged from openly discussing your grades during class sessions. Your grade for the course will consist of grades in five categories:

- Final exam – 30 %
- Midterm exam – 20 % (*50 % at midterm*)
- Event plan – 25 %
- Assignments – 15 %
- Attendance/participation – 10 %

*NOTE: Be certain to sign the attendance sheet during every class session. It is the method I will use for tracking your attendance. If you will miss class for a university-sanctioned happening, I must have a notice beforehand from the appropriate university official. Failure to provide such documentation will result in your absence being counted against you. You are encouraged to submit due assignments before your absence. If you are unable to do so, you must arrange it with me and submit any assignment on your return class session.*

## Exams

You will take two exams—a midterm and a final—in this course. The exams each will consist of 10 essay questions, each worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points per exam. Partial credit will be given where applicable.

The exams will consist of materials covered in text readings, lecture materials and handouts. You should finalize all text readings before the exams. I will address components of the exams as they are discussed in class. I also will provide a review for each exam. Please understand that I am not interested in your ability to memorize content, therefore the exams will consist mostly of applying the knowledge you've learned in the course to “real world” scenarios.

The midterm exam is from **9 to 9:50 a.m. March 9**. It is worth 20 percent of your final grade, but is worth 50 percent at midterm.

The final exam is **8-10 a.m. May 6**. It is worth 30 percent of your final grade.

You should plan to take the exams at the scheduled time. Make-up exams will be given only in extreme emergencies (aka: death or near death). I am unlikely to approve a make-up exam. If I do, the make-up exam will be more academically rigorous than the original.

## **Event Plan**

The final project in this course is to create a full plan for a professional event of your choice. Many regular assignments will become part of this plan. I will provide more information about the plan during about the third week of class. **The plan is due no later than 10 a.m. April 27.**

## **Assignments**

You will complete a variety of assignments to apply specific components of media relations and event planning thinking and practice. I will provide a handout that explains each assignment. I encourage you to keep these handouts and follow them carefully.

Assignments will be done individually or in groups, as I deem appropriate.

Each assignment will be worth 100 points.

Assignments are due at the beginning of class unless I state otherwise. If you are late for class, your assignment will not be accepted.

You must print your assignments on your own time. You will not be excused from class or receive an excused tardy because of printing-related issues.

Missed assignments cannot be made up without my approval. I will not accept assignments sent to class with peers.

If you need an extension on an assignment because of an absence, you must schedule a time to privately discuss it with me. If you miss an assignment and are allowed to make it up, you must do so at the scheduled time or you will not receive credit.

## **Deadlines**

Deadlines are critical in the media business. Do not attempt to submit work after the deadline. It will not be accepted. There are few exceptions.

## **Missed Assignments**

Missed assignments cannot be made up without my approval. I will not accept assignments sent to class with peers. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain any assignments, handouts and notes that you miss. I will not contact you regarding your absence. I also will not save copies of course materials distributed during individual class periods. If you need an extension on an assignment because of an absence, you must schedule a time to privately discuss it with me. If you miss an assignment and are allowed to make it up, you must do so at the scheduled time or you will not receive credit.

## **Attendance**

Public relations practitioners must be reliable. Missing deadlines can cost you your job.

Course attendance and participation are required and will be counted as 10 percent of your final grade. You are expected to arrive to class on time and leave when class is complete.

At this point in your academic career you should understand the concept of decisions and consequences. You are free to make your own decisions regarding your attendance. However, it's important that you are aware that lack of attendance in any class will result in you missing important material that will not be repeated. In addition, repeat absences will result in the lowering of your final grade.

If you cannot avoid missing class, you must notify me prior to the class session. Do not assume that I know you will not be present. Communicate with me regarding every necessary absence. Notification of an absence from anyone but yourself will not be considered adequate. Do not send word of your absence via another classmate. I will give excused absences on a case-by-case basis.

Remember: ***You make choices. You live with the consequences.***

## **Participation**

You are required to participate in class. Participation could include commenting on readings, interactive lecture, and careful and active note taking.

It is essential for you to keep pace with the assigned readings to survive this course.

Asking questions always is encouraged. Discussion of things unrelated to class is discouraged. You are not allowed to be disruptive in any way that takes class value from your classmates.

You must always attend class prepared for participation. This includes having paper, writing utensils, books, etc. during every class session.

## **Technology**

You are allowed to use a laptop, iPad or smart phone to take notes during the course session. You are not allowed to have your cell phone ringer or alert notifications on during class. Students found texting or using cell phones or computers for anything other than note taking during class will be asked to discontinue the practice or leave. Repeated issues will result in lowering of your attendance/participation grade.

## **Printing**

Assignments must be completed outside of class, unless otherwise directed. All assignments must be typed and stapled.

You will not be excused from class to print assignments. Do not come to class to discuss printing with me. It is up to you to determine if you should be late to class to print.

If you do not have access to a computer and/or printer, you are welcome to use the mass communications computer lab at the front of our department.

Malfunctions of the equipment in the computer lab will not constitute an excuse for a late assignment.

## **Course schedule:**

*This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Readings should be completed before the class session where they're listed. I will move ahead in the lecture if we complete a subject early.*

## **WEEK 1**

**Monday, Jan. 12:**

- Course introduction

**Wednesday, Jan. 14:**

- Lecture: Intro to Media Relations

**Friday, Jan. 16:**

- Lecture: Intro to Event Planning

## **WEEK 2**

**Monday, Jan. 19 – MLK Day. No class.**

**Wednesday, Jan. 21:**

- Lecture: Creating a Media Relations Program
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 1: Getting Started

**Friday, Jan. 23:**

- Lecture: Event Types
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 1: The First Steps: Initial Planning & Budgeting

## **WEEK 3**

**Monday, Jan. 26:**

- Lecture: Defining and Identifying News
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 2: News

**Wednesday, Jan. 28:**

- Lecture: Event vision/objectives

**Friday, Jan. 30:**

- Assignment

## **WEEK 4**

**Monday, Feb. 2:**

- Lecture: Communication Tools
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 3: Tools of the Trade

**Wednesday, Feb. 4:**

- Lecture: Event Budget

**Friday, Feb. 6:**

- Assignment

## **WEEK 5**

**Monday, Feb. 9:**

- Lecture: Working with Reporters
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 4: Reporters

**Wednesday, Feb. 11:**

- Lecture: Working with Reporters

**Friday, Feb. 13:**

- Assignment

**WEEK 6**

**Monday, Feb. 16:**

- Lecture: Event timing
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 2: Organization and Timing

**Wednesday, Feb. 18:**

- Lecture: Event organization

**Friday, Feb. 20:**

- Assignment

**WEEK 7**

**Monday, Feb. 23:**

- Lecture: Preparing spokespeople
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 5: Spokespersons

**Wednesday, Feb. 25:**

- Lecture: Preparing spokespeople

**Friday, Feb. 27:**

- Assignment

**WEEK 8**

**Monday, March 2:**

- Lecture: Event venue
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 3: Location, Location, Location
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 6: Venue Requirements

**Wednesday, March 4:**

- Lecture: Event transportation
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 4: Transportation

**Friday, March 6:**

- Midterm Review

**WEEK 9**

**Monday, March 9 – Midterm Exam**

**Wednesday, March 11:**

- Review the Midterm

**Friday, March 13:**

- TBD

**Monday, March 16-Friday, March 20 – Spring Break. No Class.**

## **WEEK 10**

**Monday, March 23:**

- Lecture: Media Relations Ethics
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 6: Ethics

**Wednesday, March 25:**

- Lecture: The Event Experience
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 5: Guest Arrival

**Friday, March 27:**

- Lecture: The Event Experience
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 9: Other Considerations

## **WEEK 11**

**Monday, March 30:**

- Lecture: International Media Relations
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 8: Going Global

**Wednesday, April 1:**

- Lecture: Event Promotion
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 7: Media Events

**Friday, April 3:**

- Lecture: Event Promotion
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 7: Who's It All For?

## **WEEK 12**

**Monday, April 6:**

- Lecture: Crisis Communication
- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 9: Crisis Planning

**Wednesday, April 8:**

- Lecture: Crisis Communication

**Friday, April 10:**

- Assignment

## **WEEK 13**

**Monday, April 13:**

- Lecture: Evaluating Media Relationships

- Read *On Deadline*, Chapter 10: Measurement/Evaluation

**Wednesday, April 15:**

- Lecture: Event F&B
- Read *Event Planning*, Chapter 8: Food and Beverage

**Friday, April 17:**

- Assignment

**WEEK 14**

**Monday, April 20:**

- Lecture: Event Evaluation
- Read *Event Planning*, Conclusion

**Wednesday, April 22:**

- Work day (tentative, based on schedule)

**Friday, April 24:**

- Work day (tentative, based on schedule)

**WEEK 15**

**Monday, April 27 – Event plan due no later than 10 a.m.**

**Wednesday, April 29:**

- Final Exam Review

**Friday, May 1:**

- Final Exam Review

**Final Exam: 8-10 a.m. Wednesday, May 6**

**Mass Communications Departmental Policies**

**LATE WORK:**

- No late work will be accepted for full credit without prior arrangement with the instructor.
- Work is due at the beginning of the class session.

**EXAMINATIONS:**

- No makeup examinations will be given unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
- NO FINAL EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN EARLIER THAN ANNOUNCED BY THE INSTRUCTOR. NO EXCEPTIONS. Students who make travel plans without confirming the scheduled finals date for this class do so at their own risk. Students who travel prior to the scheduled final exam will be unable to take the examination and must accept a zero test score.

**INCOMPLETE:**

Incomplete grades are not a student option except under extreme circumstances. Students seeking an incomplete must submit a written request supported by documentation verifying the need for this extension. The

student must be performing at a passing level and have a legitimate reason to receive an “I.” Students cannot be assigned an “I” because they have excessive unexcused absences or because they are failing the course. If an incomplete is given, the instructor will submit information which specifies what work must be done to remove the “I” and the grade to be assigned if the work is not complete. The student is responsible for submitting the work by the deadline assigned by the instructor. Incompletes are given for a limited period of time, not exceeding one year.

#### TARDINESS/ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be in class on time. Entering the classroom late is unprofessional and disruptive. Repeated tardiness is unacceptable. Students should be punctual and prepared, since these are the qualities expected by the business community. Attendance will be taken at each class session. Students are expected to attend all class sessions.

#### GRADING SCALE:

93.0 - 100	=	A	
90.0 - 92.99	=	A-	
87.5 - 89.99	=	B+	
82.5 - 87.49	=	B	
80.0 - 82.49	=	B-	
77.5 - 79.99	=	C+	
72.5 - 77.49	=	C	
70.0 - 72.49	=	C-	
67.5 - 69.99	=	D+	
62.5 - 67.49	=	D	
60.0 - 62.49	=	D-	
Below 60.0	=	F	Not I or W

#### CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:

##### STANDARD OF RESPONSIBILITY

Oklahoma City University was founded upon strong values and high standards. Honesty in academics is a priority. Students should be advised that cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. The Academic Honesty Policy can be found online at <http://starport.okcu.edu/ad/aa>

Cheating is defined as using, or supplying information that is not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or completing any other assignment. Cheating also includes turning in another’s work and representing it as being your own.

Plagiarism is defined as a unique form of cheating where persons turn in another’s work and represent it as being their own. This would include: 1) purchasing term papers and turning them in as if they are original work; 2) using a paper that has previously been turned in; 3) copying passages verbatim from books, articles, etc.; 4) submitting material for grades in which the student has not done the work required; 5) collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person; 6) misrepresentation of actions and 7) falsifying information.

Every student is expected to observe the highest standards of conduct, both on and off the campus. The University cannot accept the responsibility for the education of any student who is not in sympathy with the purposes and the regulations of the University.

Mass Communications students should be aware that this department considers the above-described conduct to be dishonorable and dishonest. Students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive a grade of "0", which is an "F", on the involved examination, project or paper and, at the professor's discretion, may receive a failing grade for the entire course.

#### EXAMINATION EQUIPMENT:

Students are not permitted to use or access the following items during an examination:

- Dictionaries
- Electronic spellers, translators, dictionaries or calculators
- Computers
- Class notes, books

Once any examination has begun, if a student wishes to leave the room they must be prepared to turn in their examination paper and/or blue book. And, it will not be returned to them for additional work.

#### DISABILITY STATEMENT:

If you believe that you need accommodations for a documented physical, psychiatric, or learning disability, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator at (405) 208-5090 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. The Student Disabilities Services Coordinator is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students a documented Access Plan, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact the Student Disabilities Services Coordinator as soon as possible. To speak with the coordinator about other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case of a building evacuation, please make an appointment as soon as possible.

#### PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds, including federal loans and grants. Title IX also prohibits student-to-student sexual harassment. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk with your professor or with the Title IX Coordinator at 405-208-5075. Visit <http://www.okcu.edu/hr/titleIX/> for more information.

#### EVACUATION POLICY:

The evacuation plan for Walker Center is as follows: Everyone on the first floor proceeds out the north doors to the north parking lot. Everyone on the second floor must exit down the north stairway, out the north doors to the parking lot. The shelter locations for Walker Center are as follows: WC 143, WC 144, and the men's and women's restrooms on the first floor. These rooms are on the east side of the first floor.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

I have read the above stated policies for the academic year 2014-15 for the Mass Communications Department.

I understand the policies and agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
B#

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Course Name and Number