

Principles of Public Relations

Fall 2012

MCPR 2313-01; three credit hours

9-9:50 a.m. MWF

Walker Center, Room 160

Professor:

Kenna Griffin

Office: Walker Center, Room 117

Office phone: 208-5043

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Office hours: Posted

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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:

Seitel, Fraser P. (2011). *The Practice of Public Relations, 11th Edition*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Materials posted on the course website, which is under the "Courses" tab on www.profkrg.com/.

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* and *The Campus* every day (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. 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*. Use the #pr and #mcpr2313 hashtags for items specifically related to this course. You also may follow my blog and other industry news on Facebook at 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 cover a variety of areas within the public relations field including writing, media relations, crisis management, publics, public opinion, social media, public relations campaign development, and employee, investor, consumer, and community

relations. I will use case studies from the book and news to help you understand what public relations is and how organizations use it. At the end of the course, you'll understand key terminology and be able to strategically think and critically analyze an organization's public relations efforts.

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 – 25 % (55 % at midterm)
- Press conference – 20 percent
- Assignments/quizzes – 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 due 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.

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.

Press Conference:

As a major project in this course, you will work in teams to conduct a 10-minute press conference based on a fictitious crisis scenario that I will provide later in the course.

The goal of the assignment is to show through practical application how difficult it is to think strategically and quickly, and to deliver intelligent and accurate answers, all the while reinforcing your organization's key messages.

This assignment will include writing an opening statement and preparing for and answering media questions. The press conference will be in the Broadcast Studio and

should be considered a professional application of your knowledge. You are expected to dress and act appropriately.

Following the press conferences, you will complete peer evaluations and we will review and discuss each team's performance.

Assignments:

You will complete a variety of assignments to apply specific components of public relations 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.

Quizzes:

You will be given a weekly news quiz every Friday. These quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class session and cannot be made up. If you miss for any reason, you will be given a zero for that day's quiz. If you are late, you will be required to submit your quiz with the last on-time student, whether it is complete or not.

The quizzes are meant to ensure that you learn how to be an actively informed public relations practitioner. They will be based on general news happenings and industry information. National and local news stories (I recommend the Associated Press and/or *USAToday's* apps), *The Campus* newspaper, MediaOCU.com, and my blog and social media accounts are all good places to look for quiz-related news items. I also will drop not-so-subtle hints during class about potential questions.

Quizzes will be 10 questions worth 10 points each. No partial credit will be given. The quizzes will include a variety of question styles—short answer, fill-in-the-blank and multiple choice.

You are not allowed to leave the classroom during a quiz without submitting it as completed. You are not allowed to talk during quizzes. No cell phones, laptops or any other electronic devices will be allowed in use or out during quizzes. You also are not allowed to use class notes, your book or supplemental reading materials during quizzes.

Attendance:

Public relations practitioners must be reliable. Missed opportunities can cost your company or organization valuable communication and/or message control. Too many missed opportunities or deadlines can cost you your job.

If you are not in class, you are likely to miss information that you need on assignments and/or exams.

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class session. Please make sure you always sign the attendance sheet.

If you are late, approach me at the end of the class session to sign the attendance. Do not interrupt course lecture to sign the attendance sheet.

You are expected to arrive to class on time and leave when class is complete. If you cannot avoid missing class, you must notify me as soon as possible. I will give excused absences on a case-by-case basis.

Course attendance and participation are required and will be counted as 10 percent of your final grade.

In other words, missing class will impact your grade in multiple ways.

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.

Engagement & Note-taking:

You are allowed to use a laptop, iPad or smart phone to document and/or live tweet class notes during the course session. If you choose to live tweet the course session, please use the #mcpr2313 hashtag. Also, you should review and adhere to the classroom Twitter policies, which are linked to the course site. Tips for getting the most out of live tweeting classes/events also can be found there.

Technology:

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:

Writing assignments must be completed outside of class. 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 late assignments.

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, Aug. 20

- Course introduction
- Lecture: *Why study public relations?*

Wednesday, Aug. 22

- Read Seitel, Chapter 1: *What Is Public Relations, Anyway?*
- Lecture: *What is PR?*

Friday, Aug. 24

- News Quiz 1
- Case Study 1

WEEK 2:

Monday, Aug. 27

- Read Seitel, Chapter 2: *The History and Growth of Public Relations*
- Lecture: *History of PR*

Wednesday, Aug. 29

- Lecture: *History of PR*
- Lecture: *Communication*

Friday, Aug. 31

- News Quiz 2
- Case Study 2

WEEK 3:

Monday, Sept. 3 – Labor Day. No Class.

Wednesday, Sept. 5

- Lecture: *Communication*
- Read Seitel:
 - Chapter 3: *Communication*
 - Chapter 18: *Public Relations and Social Media*

Friday, Sept. 7

- News Quiz 3
- Case Study 3

WEEK 4:

Monday, Sept. 10

- Lecture: *Publics and public opinion*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 4: *Public Opinion*

Wednesday, Sept. 12

- Lecture: *Publics and public opinion*

Friday, Sept. 14

- News Quiz 4
- Case Study 4

WEEK 5:

Monday, Sept. 17

- Lecture: *Management*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 5: *Management*

Wednesday, Sept. 19

- Lecture: *Management*

Friday, Sept. 21

- News Quiz 5
- Case Study 5

WEEK 6:

Monday, Sept. 24

- Lecture: *Law/Ethics*

Wednesday, Sept. 26

- Lecture: *Law/Ethics*
- Read Seitel:
 - Chapter 6: *Ethics*
 - Chapter 7: *The Law*

Friday, Sept. 28

- News Quiz 6
- Case Study 6

WEEK 7:

Monday, Oct. 1

- Lecture: *Research*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 8: *Research*

Wednesday, Oct. 3

- Lecture: *Research*

Friday, Oct. 5

- News Quiz 7
- Case Study 7

WEEK 8:

Monday, Oct. 8

- Lecture: *Media Relations*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 9: *Media Relations*

Wednesday, Oct. 10

- Review for Midterm

Friday, Oct. 12 – Midterm Exam

WEEK 9:

Monday, Oct. 15 – Fall Break. No Class.

Wednesday, Oct. 17

- Lecture: *Employee Relations*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 10: *Employee Relations*

Friday, Oct. 19

- News Quiz 8
- Case Study 8

WEEK 10:

Monday, Oct. 22

- Lecture: *Community Relations*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 11: *Community Relations*

Wednesday, Oct. 24

- Lecture: *Community Relations*

Friday, Oct. 26

- News Quiz 9
- Case Study 9

WEEK 11:

Monday, Oct. 29

- Lecture: *Government Relations*
- Read Seitel:
 - Chapter 12: *Government Relations*
 - Chapter 14: *International Relations*

Wednesday, Oct. 31

- Lecture: *Government Relations*

Friday, Nov. 2

- News Quiz 10
- Case Study 10

WEEK 12:

Monday, Nov. 5

- Lecture: *Consumer Relations*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 13: *Consumer Relations*

Wednesday, Nov. 7

- Lecture: *Consumer Relations*

Friday, Nov. 9

- News Quiz 11
- Case Study 11

WEEK 13:

Monday, Nov. 12

- Lecture: *Crisis Management*
- Read Seitel, Chapter 19: *Crisis Management*

Wednesday, Nov. 14

- Lecture: *Crisis Management*

Friday, Nov. 16 – Press Conferences

WEEK 14:

Monday, Nov. 19

- Press Conference review

Wednesday, Nov. 21 – Thanksgiving Break. No Class.

Friday, Nov. 23 – Thanksgiving Break. No Class.

WEEK 15:

Monday, Dec. 3

- Lecture: *PR Writing*
- Read Seitel:
 - Chapter 15: *Public Relations Writing*
 - Chapter 16: *Writing for the Eye and Ear*

Wednesday, Dec. 5

- Review for Final exam

Friday, Dec. 7

- Review for Final exam

Wednesday, Dec. 12 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. – Final Exam

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. Incompletes are given for a limited period of time.

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 need an accommodation due to a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact Student Health and Disability Service Office immediately at 208-5991 or 208-5090. Advance notice is required for many accommodations.

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 2012-13 for the Mass Communications Department.

I understand the policies and agree to abide by them.

Name

Student ID# or SSN#

Date

Course Name and Number