

Public Relations Cases

323-01 | Location TBA | Wednesday 2-5 p.m.

Office Location: Life Hall 231C**Office Hours:** M/T/Th, 1-2, and by appt.**Telephone:** (973) 655-5130**E-mail:** KentM@Mail.Montclair.Edu**WWW:** <http://www.Montclair.Edu/Pages/CommStudies/Kent/Index.htm>

C **Course Description:** Public Relations Cases uses a case-study method to teach students about theoretical and applied principles of public relations campaign management. Students examine successful/unsuccessful examples of public relations in order to learn how to plan more effective campaigns and to evaluate completed campaigns. As part of the course students continue to hone their writing skills and learn to be more critical of the role played by the media, opinion leaders, and multiple publics in the public relations process.

Objectives

- To learn about successful/unsuccessful organizations in order to benchmark performance and develop strategic evaluation/planning skills.
- To learn about different types of public relations practiced by government, financial, nonprofit, crisis, etc.
- To understand how to conduct the research necessary to develop a strategic plan.
- To continue to hone public relations writing skills and to become more critical message producers.

The Department of Communication Studies' attendance policy: Students may miss the equivalent of one week of classes without penalty. If three classes are missed (on a two day a week schedule), your final grade will be reduced by 5%; if four classes are missed, your final grade will be reduced by 10%. Missing more than four classes will result in a failing grade for the course. **Note: There are no excused absences.** Being sick, in an automobile accident, going on a job interview, attending a conference, getting arrested, etc., will not be excused. Coming late or leaving early 3 times equals an absence.

Required Texts

- Hendrix, J. A. (2004). *Public relations cases* (6th edition). Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth. ISBN: 0-534-60610-5
- Goldstein, N. (Ed.) (2000). *The Associated Press stylebook and libel manual and briefing on media law with internet guide and glossary*. New York: Associated Press. ISBN: 0-201-33985-4
- Diggs-Brown, B., & Glou, J. L. (2004). *The pr styleguide: Formats for public relations practice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning. ISBN: 0-534-57036-4

More than anything else, public relations is characterized by effective writing. As a result, professional writing standards are expected on all assignments. Professional standards include: correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and careful proofreading. No spelling errors are allowed—having even one spelling error will result in a zero for the assignment. Except when otherwise noted, all assignments should be double-spaced (23-25 lines-per-page), have one-inch (1") margins all around, and be written in one of the following fonts: Bookman or Bookman Old Style 11 pt., Palatino 11 pt., New Century Schoolbook 11 pt., or Garamond 12 pt.

For headings, use **boldface type, Ariel Black, or Helvetica Black.**

Miscellaneous

- All readings are due on the date listed.
- Missed exams cannot be made up for any reason.
- An exam may only be taken early with permission.
- Late assignments will be discounted 10% per calendar day.
- Familiarize yourself with all of the policies listed on the Communication Studies department's home page.

Assignments

Points

Questions (prepare a list of 5 questions, with quotes, for chapters 1–10)	† 30%
News Release 1 (select one case study from chapters 3–4 and see me)	‡ 5%
News Release 2 (select one case study from chapters 5–8 and see me)	‡ 5%
News Release 3 (select one case study from chapters 9–12 and see me)	‡ 5%
Silver Anvil Award Evaluation (Evaluate three related award winners)	§ 15%
Interview & Evaluation (Interview 2 public relations people—essay & pres.)	Ω 15%
Exams (10%/15%)—Take-home case studies (5–7 pp.)	25%
Total	100%

† Each chapter's list of questions is required. If you make them look like the samples I provide you with, you will receive full credit. You may redo the first one until you get it right. Any list not submitted on time will receive zero credit.

‡ Select one of the case studies from the chapters indicated, familiarize yourself with it, and come see me. Based on that case study you select, I will give you a new scenario (crisis, media event, scandal, change of schedule, new product/service, etc.) to use as the basis for your news release. You may write these whenever you choose, however, you **MUST** come to see me in-person for your specific assignment, I will not assign them over the telephone, by e-mail, etc. News releases must be rewritten until they are perfect to receive full credit. All news release final drafts are due by the end of April.

§ Visit the PRSA's Web site (or wherever else I direct you for this) and select three award winners (in related organizations, campaigns, categories, etc.) to evaluate. Your evaluation should identify the similarities/differences (in terms of strategies, tactics, publics, goals, etc.—a handout will be provided) of each campaign and explain why the choices made were effective/successful. Your analysis should draw on all that you have learned about communication—intercultural, nonverbal, theories, principles of public relations, etc.—in order to account for the success of the award winner's campaign.

Ω Identify two public relations professionals to interview. Before you contact them you must get approval of your telephone script and e-mail message from me. Based on the categories used in the textbook for each case study, develop a list of 7–10 questions to ask your interviewees—you must also secure approval for these questions before you proceed. *The interviewees selected must have worked on a public relations campaign.* Based on your interviews you will create two case studies—such as is illustrated in the textbook—complete with samples of the messages created (obtained from the interviewees). You will cover what you learned in a presentation (10–15 minutes) to your classmates.

Academic Dishonesty: The University is an academic community of scholars. Academic dishonesty is a very serious offense against the integrity of this community and will not be tolerated. All academic work submitted by you is assumed to be your own original work and to contain your own thought, research, and self-expression. Work that borrows the ideas, organization, or wording, from others must be properly acknowledged. Similarly, work that was conducted for another class should not be passed off as original.

Plagiarism is the unauthorized or inappropriate use of the words or ideas of others. Plagiarism occurs when written or spoken material is borrowed (even from oneself), in whole or in part, and passed off as original by a writer or speaker. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, presenting someone else's ideas, speech, presentation, essay, book review, or news release as original. It also includes failing to document or cite the source of word-for-word or paraphrased material in oral presentations or written assignments.

It is my policy to pursue plagiarism vigorously, to fail students who plagiarize for the entire class, and to report cases of plagiarism to the university administration.

Public Relations Cases Course Schedule (readings **due** on date listed)

Week	Date	Assignment	Due
Week 1:	1.22	Overview of Class Introductions	
Week 2:	1.26	Read: Coca Cola case study and review Hofstede	
	1.29		
Week 3:	2.2	Read: Chapter 1 (Submit list of questions as per samples)	
	2.5		
Week 4:	2.9	Read: Chapter 2 (Submit list of questions as per samples)	
	2.12		
Week 5:	2.16	Read: Chapter 3 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	2.19		
Week 6:	2.23	Read: Chapter 4 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	2.26	Interview Evaluation and Presentations Due	
Week 7:	3.1	Read: Chapter 5 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	3.4		
Week 8:	3.8	Read: Chapter 6 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	3.11		Distribute Exam I
Week 9:	3.15	Spring Break—No class	
	3.18	Spring Break—No class	
Week 10:	3.22	Read: Chapter 7 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	3.25		Exam I Due
Week 11:	3.29	Read: Chapter 8 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	4.1		
Week 12:	4.5	Read: Chapter 9 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	4.8		Silver Anvil Award Evaluation Due
Week 13:	4.12	Read: Chapter 10 (Submit list of questions as per samples) †	
	4.15		
Week 14:	4.19	Read: Chapter 11 †	
	4.22		
Week 15:	4.26	Read: Chapter 12	Distribute Exam II
	4.29		All News Releases must be completed
Week 16:	5.3	Wrap-up and Evaluations	
Final Exam	5.6		Exam II Due

† News release may be submitted
