

COM 340-01: PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES SYLLABUS ~ SPRING 2021 T/TH ~ 11:00 am – 12:15 pm ~ Hyflex Flowe Room 114

Zoom Virtual Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 1pm to 2:30pm By Appointment as well

Due to COVID-19, Instructor will not hold in-person office hours.

Cell Phone: 770-990-3222

Eptreadwell@peace.edu

The syllabus for COM 340: Public Relations Techniques, which has been posted on Moodle, may change during the semester to adapt to and account for student interests, continued discussions, more in-depth coverage of course topics and current affairs. Any changes will be communicated in class and via email. We will, however, cover all the material outlined in the syllabus.

Course Description

In this course, the student will learn essential professional and practical skills and techniques used in public relations that are essential for creating and implementing effective campaigns. The student will learn how to create a variety of written, oral, and visual public relations tools such as writing press releases, creating story angles and media pitch letters, designing and writing public opinion survey questionnaires, fact sheets, media tip sheets, PSAs and radio promotion spots, selecting photography for key sets, and special event planning to name a few.

Course Structure & Synchronous Class:

This course is designated as a Hyflex course. However, the instructor will not be in the classroom. Rather, the instructor will be remotely "attending" class using Zoom. Students will be attending in-person in the classroom. If you are unable to attend in-person at times, you are responsible for logging into class with Zoom on your personal device at the start of our class (11am). Students are responsible, just as if class was meeting in person, for attending all classes, whether in-person or online. The WPU Attendance Policy applies to this Hyflex course just as it applies to in-person courses.

Face Masks/Food & Drink:

Due to COVID-19, ALL students attending class in-person MUST wear face masks as per WPU policy. If a student fails to do so, the student will be first asked by the instructor to put on properly the face mask (and keep it on for the duration of class). If the student

fails to comply, the student will be immediately asked to leave the classroom and the student will be counted as being absent for that class.

As face masks are required during the entire class meeting, students are unable to bring food and drinks into the classroom.

Required Textbooks

Berger, J. (2016). Contagious: Why Things Catch On.

Smith, R.D. (2017). *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* (5th ed.). New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Other Readings:

Please be sure to regularly access these sources from this location:

http://prnewpros.prsa.org/

- PRSA Trends and Issues
- PRSA SmartBrief
- PR Week
- The Public Relations Strategist
- Public Relations Tactics
- The Edge

Everything PR http://everything-pr.com/about/

The Skimm – you may also sign up for daily e-blast (M-F) https://www.theskimm.com Ragan's PR Daily https://www.prdaily.com

O'Dwyer's Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications

https://www.odwyerpr.com

Everything PR https://everything-pr.com

Public Relations Today https://www.publicrelations.today.com

Ad Week https://www.adweek.com

Personal Branding for Dummies http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/personal-branding-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html

Attendance

As this course is being taught virtually (Hyflex) due to the coronavirus, attendance will be required in our virtual Zoom classroom and/or in-person. Attendance is 10% of your final grade. Attendance at every class is expected and required.

If a student is not in class, or misses part of any class for any reason, the student remains responsible for ALL the material covered, including submission of assignments (timely), tests, quizzes, graded or ungraded exercises, and the like. All activities, discussions, quizzes, and the like conducted during a missed class will result in the student receiving a zero grade.

Please notify your instructor 48 hours (when possible) of any planned absence (including school activities) and as soon as possible in case of an illness (COVID-19 related) or other emergency. Only when a student provides documentation will such absence be deemed "excused" as per university policy (additional accommodations are made due to the pandemic).

Hyflex Delivery & Course Moodle Website:

This course is offered fully online, but we will be holding virtual synchronous class meetings on campus for students while the instructor will be virtual. This means that you will be provided a link to our Zoom class, and you will be able to log into the course and participate when you are unable to attend class in-person for whatever reason.

There are weekly readings, activities, and assignments which are all listed in Moodle. You should expect to spend on average 10-15 hours per week on an individual 3-credit course. This includes the readings, posts, and assignments as well as being actively engaged in the message boards. Please log into the course daily, and at a minimum 4-5 times per week.

Students are required to use the course Moodle site and other online resources as assigned. Instructor may post additional readings for some class meetings in Moodle. Students are required to have read all the material listed for each day prior to the class meeting.

This syllabus is tentative; Moodle is the last word for the most current course schedule, including assignment due dates. Students are expected to regularly check Moodle for announcements, assignments and course calendar at least once between class meetings. It is your responsibility to know how to access and interact with it. This is where course material, assignments, discussion points, and course updates will be posted.

Any issues a student may encounter with technology must be immediately reported and will not serve as an excuse for failure to submit timely assignments, etc. For IT support, please contact the IT Help Desk at x2417 or helpdesk@peace.edu. If you are unable to speak with someone, please leave a message as it will be automatically forwarded to IT staff for a timely response.

Course Communication/Email & Virtual Office Hours:

The best way to reach Dr. Treadwell is by email (eptreadwell@peace.edu). I am available at the times listed above for virtual office hours as well as by appointment. Please use WPU Connect to sign up for a private meeting appointment. Office hours are synchronous which means you may "stop by" virtually during these times and the professor will be there to discuss questions related to the course.

Students are expected to promptly respond to emails from the instructor. Likewise, the instructor will respond to student emails within 24 hours (except on the weekends). It remains the responsibility of the student to check Moodle daily as the course delivery is Hyflex with your instructor being virtual.

Due to COVID-19, the professor will not be holding any in-person office hours.

Electronic and Digital Devices:

Please be respectful and do not use your digital/electronic devices in class to disrupt your classmates or instructor (online and face-to-face). If a student violates this policy, the student will be given one verbal warning. Any further violations will result in either the instructor confiscating the phone or the student will be asked to leave the classroom (this is at the discretion of the instructor).

Deadlines & Late Assignments:

Adhering to deadlines is required for media professionals as it is in all other professions. Therefore, missing deadlines will not be tolerated. If you submit any graded assignment past the deadline, the student will receive a failing grade of 0% ("F"). This applies for graded and well as ungraded assignments. Ungraded assignments are still required assignments. There will be no make-up assignments unless due to death in the family (requires documentation as per WPU policy) or illness (requires documentation as per WPU policy, however accommodations related to COVID-19 as per university policy).

Due to COVID-19, if a student has been exposed or is caring for a family member, mitigating circumstances that prevent you from completing assignments or missing class, please contact the professor as soon as possible, preferably prior to the deadline, so other arrangements and accommodations can be provided.

Assignment Submissions:

Please submit ALL assignments in Moodle, and do not email your instructor any submissions. Late assignments will not be accepted unless due to documented illness or emergency as previously noted above.

Please be sure to use Times New Roman 12-point font, and double-spaced, for all submissions in Word or GoogleDocs (no PDF or other formats will be accepted without prior written approval of instructor).

This class is designed to foster discussion and interaction. Students are expected to read and actively engage with classmates, and apply the material in a substantive manner.

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during virtual office hours for assistance with the course.

Written & Oral Style & Presentation:

For any career, having a command of oral and written skills, as well as developing a polished and professional style and presentation, are essential to success. The student is to use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling, and all work must be typed and written with well-crafted sentences and paragraphs, and presented in a professional manner.

Although this is not a writing course, and we understand that some people are stronger writers than others, it is expected that your written assignments have been reasonably edited for spelling and grammatical mistakes. Habitual typos and nonsensical sentences will result in lowered grades. If you know that writing is not your strongpoint, take advantage of the University's Writing Center or ask someone you know who is a strong writer to look over your work. Avoid doing assignments at the last minute, especially if you know that you need extra time to edit your work.

Grammar Tips:

https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/tips-grammar-punctuation-and-style

Learn how to use commas:

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/owlprint/607

Comma splices:

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/engagement/2/1/34/

Transition Words:

http://www.smart-words.org/linking-words/transition-words.html

Essay Writing Tips:

https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/essay-structure

Citation Format:

To control for plagiarism, acknowledging, paraphrasing and quoting sources will indicate that you are citing or making reference to another person's thoughts, ideas and/or words and not presenting them as your own.

Citations are to be referenced using APA Citation Style, and you can refer to Purdue OWL for additional assistance:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_g_uide/general_format.html

Student Learning Outcomes & Objectives:

Students will be able to do the following at the completion of this course:

- 1. Students will understand public relations tools, skills and techniques to professionally and effectively communicate with the media and the target audience.
 - o Assessment: Quizzes & Class Participation

- 2. Students will understand the strategic use of traditional media, social media, and other new media channels in communicating and building relationships with various publics.
 - Assessment: Situation Analysis; Theme & Goals/Objectives; Strategies, Message & Tactics; and Implementation & Evaluation
- 3. Students will apply the basic elements of the public relations process, including publics, research, planning, goals and objectives, strategies, issue solving, message creation, tactics, as well as legal and ethical issues.
 - o Assessment: Strategic Plan & Presentation

Class Participation & Performance:

While the format of the class will vary, you can expect a variety of lectures, active class discussion, and the application of the material you have read. Therefore, please come to class ready to share your ideas, as this will enhance your academic achievement and pursuits.

Class Discussion: I expect you to come to class having done the reading and prepared to participate in class discussion. Occasionally, we may discuss sensitive and/or controversial issues in class. While I do encourage disagreement and discussion (with each other and with me), I ask that we remain civil and respectful. We will follow basic rules of decorum for class discussions that we all will be responsible for following.

News Content: In addition to your reading, I expect you to keep up with current events. It's important to know what's going on in the world, and what issues your clients (today and in the future) face or will face. It makes you a more effective practitioner! While I don't have news quizzes scheduled for this class, I will start implementing them if you are not keeping up with the news.

Working Together: Collaboration is a vital part of the communications field, and there is no penalty for working together when reading the material, studying and conducting research in the library. However, each student is required to turn in his/her own work, and write his/her own material, unless a group project is assigned.

Work Outside of Normal Class Hours: Like most courses, this course demands work outside of scheduled class time. This includes time for discussion board postings, research, preparing for class, and collaborating with classmates. Therefore, be sure to organize and plan ahead!

Classroom Protocol and Behavior:

It is required that students shall exhibit the highest level of regard and respect for fellow classmates and the instructor. This must not interfere or impede in any way other

students' learning or the instructor's teaching. To this end, opinions and comments expressed in class must be respected. If a class member disrupts the class in any way, in the instructor's discretion, the instructor may remove the student from class and it will be counted as an unexcused absence for the day.

Student Expectations:

It is expected that students will:

- 1. Conduct themselves as professionals.
- 2. Maintain a respectful learning environment
- 3. Use inclusive language in speaking and writing.
- 4. Raise questions & contribute observations be active participants during course.
- 5. Be responsible for content of assigned readings, & be prepared to discuss in class.
- 6. Take active responsibility in building & ensuring a constructive learning community & environment in the classroom.
- 7. Complete assignments on time and submit in Moodle.
- 8. Treat information shared in class with respect and sensitivity.
- 9. Demonstrate analytical thinking.

Final grades in this course will be based on the following:

Participation:	10%
Situation Analysis:	10%
Theme & Goals/Objectives:	10%
Action/Response Strategies, Messaging, Tactics	10%
Implementation & Evaluation	10%
Strategic Plan:	25%
Presentation:	10%
Quizzes	15%
	100% 100 points

Extra Credit:

Syllabus Quiz	1 point	
Post-Course Evaluation	1 point	
100% Attendance (Virtual & In-Person)	3 points	

Quizzes:

There will be a few quizzes (five) throughout the semester that will cover the readings. If a student misses the scheduled quiz, no make-ups will be permitted without necessary documentation (such as a doctor's note, etc.).

Presentation of Strategic Plan:

This will consist of 10-15 minutes (individual, but if a group of 2 students, the presentation must be at least 20 minutes), visual aids included, explanation in detail of all of the components required (below) for this project. This presentation will be scheduled for the Final Exam time on Tuesday, May 4 at 10:30am to 12:30.

Strategic Plan:

You will select an organization of your choice, and follow the different steps in the Smith textbook. You can work individually or in groups of 2 students. Please be sure to include the following components in the final Strategic Plan. Throughout the semester, different sections will be due for a grade and feedback. The final Plan must include the revisions, as well as an explanation of why you made the revisions (not "my professor told me to") and justifying your changes (please relate this to the text and material you have learned this semester). The final Plan should be between 10-15 pages in length. As part of your preparation, you should conduct a SWOT analysis as well (be sure to turn this in with your situation analysis). This should be supported by research, corporate information, and reliable sources.

Students must also include relevant and appropriate written components, such as a press release, media pitch letters, survey questionnaires, fact sheets, PSAs and radio promotion spots, blogs and social media content, special event plans, and visual elements (including but not limited to photography). These items should be part of the final Plan, but also should be submitted to the instructor for feedback with the appropriate assignments (such as Messaging, Tactics, etc.).

- 1. <u>Situation Analysis</u> this should include the problem/opportunity statement; background of the situation and the organization as well as the internal and external environment; public perceptions, strategic key messages; description of the target public(s); cultural/social environment in which the problem or opportunity exists. Please use SWOT here.
- 2. <u>Theme & Research</u> this should include primary & secondary research, and if additional research will be needed throughout the campaign.
- 3. <u>Goals & Objectives</u>: these should be specific and measurable for each audience that support the goal, and please detail how they will be measured. Objectives should follow the SMART model (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely). The goal should be the target you hope to reach either as a result of a specific crisis or situation, or on an on-going basis, depending on the client's situation.
- 4. <u>Analysis of the Public(s)</u> which are the public(s) relevant for this client, include opinion leaders, cultural context and the benefits.
- 5. <u>Action & Response Strategies</u> proactive strategies and/or reactive strategies relevant to the client selected. These should support the overall goal(s) and objectives of the client.

- 6. <u>Messaging</u> include ethos, pathos and logos as well as verbal communication for the structure and content of the message as well as the visual communication components.
- 7. <u>Selection of Tactics</u> include a complete discussion of tactics for each audience, not a generic list of ideas. Please include a representative samples of tactics (ex news releases, PSAs, flyers, website page, social media initiatives, etc.) in the plan appendix. This should include earned media, owned media, and paid media.
- 8. <u>Implementation</u> include the campaign schedule, budget, frequency of tactics and specific tasks. Include a social media analysis, which PR best practices should be used to do the following: (a) create content & gain followers; (b) start conversations & encourage participation; (c) launch products and ideas; (d) start social movement; (e) going viral & generate word of mouth advertising.
- 9. <u>Evaluation</u> include a discussion of how each tactic will be evaluated for every target audience, to measure the success of the plan.

<u>Attendance & Involvement:</u>

As a student, you can expect to spend two or three hours outside of class for every hour spent in class. This time is spent doing homework assignments, reading required texts, reviewing class notes, watching videos provided by the professor, asking questions about the material, preparing for tests and quizzes, and similar activities. This is a critical piece of the learning process and will be crucial to your success in this course. You must be an active participant in your learning.

For this 3-credit course, this means that you should be spending 6 to 9 hours of time outside of class studying. Some classes will take more time, and some will take less time. Your week as a student taking 15 credit hours has 45 to 60 hours that should be dedicated to your classwork as noted above. Having a family, a job and/or other commitments will require a careful budgeting of your time, and excellent organization to stay on track and timely complete all required assignments.

Even though this course is offered on an online platform, attendance at every class is expected. Students will be graded on both attendance and participation, as well as other in-class activities.

Unexcused absences may affect your grade. All missed classes will be considered "unexcused" unless as outlined in the WPU Student Handbook. If a student misses 20% or more of the course, the student will receive a failing grade for this course. A student will loose 1 point for every unexcused absence. However, a student can earn 3 bonus points for 100% attendance.

However, in light of COVID-19, adjustments may be necessary, such as if a student becomes ill, has been exposed to the virus, must be quarantined, or if the student is caring for family members who have been exposed.

If you report any COVID related concerns to me, I am required to report this information to Health Services. While our health and safety are of the utmost importance, please also be respectful of individuals' privacy and refrain from publicly disclosing information about your own or others' health information or status. Students will not be penalized or COVID related absences.

Please notify the instructor 48 hours (when possible) ahead of any planned absence, including school activities, or an illness. Documentation may be required as this falls within the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance is essential to your success in this class. As this course is synchronous, you will have regular assignments such as readings, discussion forms, and quizzes which will allow the professor to record your attendance in the class. Professors have access to when and for how long a student was on the Moodle site for each course.

Incomplete:

An Incomplete is appropriate for a student who has been making steady, successful progress in a course and has an unexpected, verifiable mitigating circumstance at the end of the semester which precludes them from completing the last assignment or exam. Poor time management is not an appropriate reason to request an Incomplete. All incomplete grade requests must be approved first by the Instructor, and then by the Department Chair. If the Incomplete is approved the student will have a specific amount of time to complete the work, as determined by the Instructor. If the student does not complete the final work, the Instructor will assign the appropriate letter grade for work completed or the grade will revert to an "F."

Grading & Feedback:

The instructor will provide feedback and post grades in Moodle within one week from the due date of each assignment.

Class Recording Policy:

Class session may be audio and/or visually recoded by the instructor only, for students enrolled in the class to refer back to, and for those students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. Likewise, students who participate inperson class setting are agreeing to have their voices recorded.

Students in this class are required to have their cameras turned on during class.

Academic Integrity:

William Peace University seeks to develop both the intellect and character of its students. All members of the University are expected to promote a culture of academic integrity,

and all students are expected to inform themselves of the University's policies and procedures related to the Honor Code.

All forms of academic misconduct are violations of the University's Honor Code. These include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in academic work or in working with others on academic requirements (tests, assignments, etc.)
- Plagiarism: Representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work, whether intentional or not
- Falsification: Falsifying or inventing any information or citation in academic work
- Facilitating academic dishonesty: Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty
- Lying: Misrepresenting information that is relevant to the classroom or academic performance

If a faculty member suspects academic misconduct has taken place, s/he will complete an Honor Code Violation Report and meet with the student to discuss. A student may accept or decline to accept responsibility. If a student accepts responsibility, s/he will be subject to the penalty determined by the faculty member. If a student declines to admit responsibility, the case will be turned over the Honor Board for adjudication. A complete summary of the Honor Code and Honor Board policy can be found in the 2019-2020 Academic Catalog.

Tutorial Services:

Peer Tutoring is available for all WPU students free of charge. Support is offered in many subjects, including anthropology, biology, business, chemistry, criminal justice, history, math, political science, psychology, simulation and game design, and writing. Free workshops on study skills and documentation styles like MLA and APA are also offered each semester. Tutorial Services also has many resources on studying, citation, grammar, and other academic topics. Students can sign up for individual appointments using WPUConnect or in person at the Center for Student Success, located on the 2nd floor of Finch Library. For more information, contact Dr. Deanna Rogers, Director of Academic Support, at drrogers@peace.edu or 919-508-2080.

Students who take advantage of the services provided by WPU's Tutorial Services, such as attending workshops or receiving peer tutoring will receive up to 3 extra points (allocated on either final project, etc. in the discretion of the instructor).

Disability or Learning Services:

Disability Services are available to all WPU students who require reasonable accommodations due to any cognitive, physical, or psychological disability, in order to provide equal access to the educational environment. Students will need to be certified

with the Disability Services Office and provide appropriate documentation to receive an Academic Accommodation Plan. For more information or to become certified, please contact a counselor in the Disability Services Office, which is located on the 1st Floor of Joyner House. You may also reach Disability Services by sending an email to Disability@peace.edu.

Final Grades: 90-100 = A

80-89 = B 70-79 = C 60-69 = D0-59 = F

COURSE SCHEDULE ~ SPRING 2021 SEMESTER COM 340-01: PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES

You are responsible for the information in the textbook, all the additional readings & viewings assigned, as well as lectures/discussion in class. Bring your textbook to each class.

Date	Assignments & Topics	Reading
Week 1	 Introductions/Overview of Syllabus and 	Purchase
- Jan. 21	Course Expectations	textbooks
Week 2 - Jan. 26 - Jan. 28	 Review of the benefits of public relations, strategic communication, advertising, and how it serves the public interest Four phases of strategic public relations Case studies in the text Syllabus Quiz due by Friday, January 29th at 11:59pm EST ** Last day to Drop/Add course is January 26th 	Smith: Introduction Berger: Chapter 1
Week 3	Practical Value of public relations	Berger:
- Feb. 2	Case studies and examples	Chapter 5
- Feb. 4	 Risk and crisis management Issue Management Analyzing the situation 	Smith: Step 1 (p. 27)
Week 4		Smith:
- Feb. 9	 Public relations and ethics 	Step 2 (p. 47)
- Feb. 11	 Checklist and Planning Example 	
	Public perception	
	 Analyzing the organization 	
	Internal and external environment	

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Week 5 - Feb. 16 - Feb. 18	 Thursday: Workshop/Peer Review of Situation Analysis DUE: Situation Analysis Saturday, Feb. 13 at 11:59pm Who is the public, characteristics and categories Who are opinion leaders, key publics, and how to identify your publics Stereotypes and culture How to rethink your public QUIZ #1 – due Feb. 19th at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 3 (p. 63) Berger: Chapter 4
Week 6 - Feb. 23 - Feb. 25	 How to establish your goals and objectives Elements of objectives Hierarchy of objectives How to develop & write objectives 	Smith: Step 4 (p. 101) Berger: Chapter 6
Week 7 - March 2 - March 4	 Formulate action & response strategies Proactive strategies such as action & communication Thursday: Workshop/Peer Review Next Assignment DUE: Themes & Goals/Objectives Saturday, March 6th at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 5 (p. 122- 159)
Week 8 - March 9 - March 11	 Reactive public relations strategies such as pre-emotive, offensive, division army, and deliberate Role of emotion QUIZ #2 – due March 12th at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 5 (p. 160- 195) Berger: Chapter 3
Week 9 - Mar. 16 - Mar. 18	 Verbal communication Developing message strategy – information, persuasion and dialogue Nonverbal communication Branding the strategic message QUIZ #3 – due March 19th at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 6
Week 10 - Mar. 23 - Mar. 25	 Selecting communication tactics Conventional tactics Ethos, Logos & Pathos Strategic tactics 	Smith: Step 7 (p. 257- 294)

Week 11 - Mar. 30 - April 1 (NO CLASS Easter)	 Interpersonal communication tactics Owned Media March 26th at 4pm LAST DAY to withdraw from class and receive a "W" for the course Tuesday: Workshop/Peer Review during class DUE: Strategies, Messaging & Tactics Wednesday, March 31st at 11:59pm 	Berger: Chapter 2 No readings
Week 12 - April 6 - April 8	 Earned Media & New Media Tactics PR and earned media Paid Media, advertising and promotional tactics How to select the right tactics for your campaign How to package your communication tactics (implementing the strategic plan QUIZ #4 – April 9th due at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 7 (p. 295- 336)
Week 13 - April 13 NO CLASS - Showcase) - Apr. 15	 Campaign schedule, frequency of tactics and timeline Budget – items, variable budget, fixed budget What should you evaluate 	Smith: Step 8
Week 14 - Apr. 20 - Apr. 22	 Design questions Evaluation criteria When to evaluate How to evaluate – judgmental assessment, communication outputs, awareness, acceptance and action objectives Data analysis DUE: Implementation & Evaluation Friday, April 23 at 11:59pm QUIZ #5 – due April 23 at 11:59pm 	Smith: Step 9
Week 15 - Apr. 27 Last Day of semester	 Tuesday: Workshop/Peer Review of Strategic Plan Extra Credit Post-Course Survey by April 27th 	None

Week 16	Final Exam ONLINE – May 4th at 10:30am	None
	 Presentations of Strategic Plan at this 	
	time	
	 Submit final Strategic Plan by 10:30am 	