

## COM 391 Special Topics in Public Relations

### Credit Hours: 3

In-Class Instructional Hours: 3

Labs: 0

Field Work: 0

### Catalog Description:

Prerequisite. COM 301

Study, research and analysis about a particular venue (such as entertainment public relations) or a particular application (such as crisis communication or fund raising); may be repeated with a different topic.

### Reasons for Addition:

(Fall 2005) Existing courses provide an overview of public relations in general settings. This course will provide a stable base for a rotating series of contemporary and relevant topics about the organizational settings of public relations and the specialized applications of the field, allowing the Communication Department to better serve students' educational and career-oriented needs. It parallels an existing Special Topics course in Journalism, which has proved effective in allowing the department to offer a variety of topical courses.

This new proposal is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. Additionally, the department is undertaking this revision to position itself for accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

<b>Student Learning Outcomes:</b>	<b>Course Content References:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
On completion of this course, students will be able to:  1. Explain various venues or applications of public relations, with theoretical foundation and current professional contexts	I, II, III, IV	1. Exams, papers, applied projects, presentations
2. Articulate and apply the primary skills associated with the particular venue or application	I, II, V	2. Exams, papers, applied projects, presentations
3. Critically evaluate cases and current events that exemplify the particular venue or application	II, III, IV, V	3. Exams, papers, applied projects, presentations
4. Draft a plan or proposal relevant to the particular venue or application	I, II	4. Exams, papers, applied projects, presentations

**Course Content:**

- I. Basics of public relations discipline
  - A. Theory and concepts
  - B. Professional context
  - C. Social and organizational environments
- II. Principles and practices
  - A. Classic successful cases
  - B. Noteworthy failures
  - C. Examples from recent/current events
- III. Standards of excellence
  - A. Professional organizations
  - B. Legal and regulatory issues
- IV. Ethical issues
  - A. Standards
  - B. Codes of ethics
  - C. Application and enforcement
- V. Contemporary issues
  - A. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
  - B. Internal voices
  - C. External critics
  - D. Challenges
  - E. Trends

## **Resources:**

### Classic Scholarship in the Field

Dozier, D.M., Grunig, L.A. & Grunig, J.E. (1995). *Managers' guide to excellence in public relations and communication management*. Mahwah NJ: Erlbaum.

Rein, I.J., Kotler, P., & Stoller, M.. (1997). *High visibility: The making and marketing of professionals into celebrities*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

### Current Scholarship in the Field

#### Arts/Entertainment focus:

Cuno, J. (ed.). (2003). *Whose Muse: Art museums and the public trust*. Princeton NJ: Princeton Univ.

Montoya, P., Vandehey, T., & Viti, P. (2002). *The personal branding phenomenon*. New York: Montoya.

Lieberman, A., & Esqate, P. (2002). *The entertainment marketing revolution: Bringing the moguls, the media and the magic to the world*. Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice-Hall.

#### Fund-raising focus:

Burnett, K. (2002). *Relationship fundraising: A donor-based approach to the business of raising money*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Shen-shu, J.S. (2002). *The e-way to philanthropy: How nonprofits can use information technology*. New York: Center for the Study of Philanthropy.

Weinstein, S. (2002). *The complete guide to fund-raising management* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Wiley.

#### Crisis communication focus:

Barton, L. (2002). *Crisis in organizations* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston: South-Western College Press.

Coombs, W.T. (1999). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing and responding*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Fearn-Banks, K. (2001). *Crisis communications: A casebook approach*. Mahwah NJ: Erlbaum.

Wilson, S., & Feck, L. (2002). *Real people, real crises: An inside look at corporate crisis communications*. Naperville IL: Oak Hill.

### Periodicals

Communication World

Journal of Public Relations Research

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Public Relations Strategist

### Electronic and/or Audiovisual Resources

[www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org) – Association of Fundraising Professionals

[www.crisisexperts.com](http://www.crisisexperts.com) – Institute for Crisis Management

[www.iabc.com](http://www.iabc.com) – International Association of Business Communicators

[www.philanthropy.org](http://www.philanthropy.org) – Center for the Study of Philanthropy and Civil Society

[www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org) – Public Relations Society of America