Midland College
Syllabus
Comm 2330
Introduction to Public Relations
SCH (3-0)

Course Description
This course will explore the history and development of public relations and present the theory and process of public relations, including the planning, implementation, and evaluation of PR campaigns.

Text, References and Supplies
You will be required to obtain the following textbook. It is available at the MC Bookstore or through an online bookseller.

(ISBN: 0-13-230451-1)

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the course the student will:

1. Develop a thorough public relations campaign for a company, governmental agency or non-profit organization. (See attached outline)
2. Research and evaluate career opportunities in the public relations field.
3. Write press releases for distribution to news media.
4. Analyze and discuss significant PR case studies taken from historical profiles.
5. Observe and evaluate the working environment of several professionals departments and agencies.
6. Identify the most effective techniques and strategies among more than 100 possibilities to overcome public relations obstacles.

Student Contributions and Class Policies
Instruction involves a variety of learning methods including industry case studies, lecture notes, open-book essay exams, Web site references, writing exercises, and a major project known as a public relations campaign. You will contact a client in need of PR consulting and activities, develop business strategies, produce PR materials and plans, and decide on measurement processes.

PR Campaign: See the outline at the end of this document for content of the project.
**Make-Up Work:** Missed tests and writing assignments turned in after deadlines will only be made-up or accepted at the discretion of the instructor with possibility of one letter grade reduction for each late assignment.

**Grade Policy:** The semester grade will be determined on a weighted average as follows:

- Campaign project: 30%
- Exams: 25%
- PR Survey: 5%
- Six Case Study Responses (3% each): 18%
- Final Exam: 17%
- Class Participation: 5%

**Note:** Instructor will reduce by one letter grade any late assignments. Grades will be assigned as follows: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 59 and below = F. A’s receive full-point credit; grades less than “A” are converted to numerical values specified above and averaged into point totals calculated to the nearest tenth of a point.

**Participation and Drop Policy:** Students are responsible for dropping themselves from the course in any situation. “F” grades will be posted for any student not meeting course requirements in a timely fashion.

**Make-Up Work:** Missed tests and writing assignments turned in after deadlines will only be made-up or accepted at the discretion of the instructor with possibility of one letter grade reduction for each late assignment.

**Class Schedule:**

**Weeks 1-2:** Orientation, Definitions; and History of Public Relations, Contrast and Compare PR and Advertising. Communication, and Management (Chapters 1-3, 5)

**Assignment:** Survey possible PR campaigns by listing five local companies (oil firms, utilities, etc.); five non-profit organizations (Red Cross, cancer society, service club etc.); and five political or society issues (abortion, environment, religion in schools, etc.). Identify an image problem or publicity need associated with each entity or subject listed. Write two or three paragraphs describing each of these identified concerns.

**Case Study #1:** “The Rise and Fall of Queen Martha” – Page 17. Read the case and completely answer all questions.

**Weeks 3-5:** Public Opinion, Ethics, Law and Research (Chapters 4, 6-8) (Reference your 15-item list and the emailed project ideas).
Case Study #2: “Exxon Corporation’s Bad Good Friday” – page 103.
Read the case and completely answer all questions.

Test on Introductory Material

Weeks 6-8: Writing Fundamentals (Chapters 16)

Assignment: Study writing principles in the chapters and write two press releases from the handout exercise material.

Read the case and completely answer all questions.

Weeks 9-12: The General Publics and PR Techniques: Print, Electronic, Internal Or Employees (Chapters 9, 10 and 11)

Case Study #4: “They’re Heeere” – page 215.
Read the case and completely answer all questions:

Test on Material presented since last test

Weeks 13-14: Specialized Publics: Multi-Cultural Communities, Consumers, Government, Investors and International. (Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15)

Case Study #5: “The Katrina Kalamity” – page 287
Read the case and completely answer all questions.

Weeks 15-16: Managing Crisis and Integrated Marketing (Chapters 17, 19)

Case Study #6: “Wendy’s Fingers a Hoaxer” – page 414
Read the case and completely answer all questions

Public Relations Campaign Project
Outline for Written Presentation

I. Introduction (Background Section)

A. History of client company or individual
B. Current problems relating to public image
C. Past promotional efforts, if any. Describe in detail (Media used, etc.)
D. Description of average customer’s profile or similar target audience
E. Discussion of image client wants to portray

II. Goals Section (Maybe ½ page)

A. General Goal
Sample: “This PR campaign intends to promote among media and professional workers the contribution of local bank personnel donating their time to local Junior Achievement projects.”

B. Specific Strategies (Include dates, media names and other specific information)
1. Place feature articles in local newspaper financial section.
2. Place PSAs in local magazines and newspaper as well as on radio and TV stations.
3. Host a reception for Junior Achievement students and invite media representatives.
4. Write a speech and deliver to local Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs.
5. Write and distribute a press release about the reception with general project information.

III. Plan Execution
Explanation: This section includes a full paragraph explanation of what you’re doing – the strategies chosen; why you’re doing it; samples such as press releases and PSAs; time chart of campaign activity; and summary of how all activities work together to accomplish general goal.)

PR Activities: press releases, press conferences, media visits to arrange articles and coverage, speeches to civic and professional groups, hosted events for press such as receptions, sponsored events such as 3-on-3 basketball and banquets, video news releases, brochures and posters, public service announcements (PSAs), photographs of events, article reprints, annual reports, article packages for media, souvenir invitations, specialty advertising (key rings, calendars, etc.), testimonial or evidence papers, backgrounder pieces (case histories, fact sheets, position papers), biographical survey projects, educational seminars, client documentary books, pre-arranged disaster plans, media kits, satellite media tours, e-mail and letter-to-the-editor projects, wine and dine activities, media lists, research surveys, press clip collections, trade shows, PBS sponsorship nights, publications, bulletin board displays, image ads, fundraising efforts, lobbying efforts point-of-purchase displays and much more.

Format:
  2 pages: Overall discussion how each of how your campaign activities work together to accomplish the general goal.
  1 page: discussion of activity one (article placement).
  1 page: sample (article outline)
  1 page: discussion of activity two (PSAs)
  1 page: sample PSA
  1 page: discussion of activity three (reception)
  1 page: sample invitation
  1 page: discussion of activity three (speech)
IV. Follow-up and Evaluation

Explanation: This section discusses the methods to be used for measuring the success or failure of the campaign. These can include event attendance, verbal and written feedback, oral and written surveys, content analysis, etc. Also suggest future campaign project ideas.

Instructor Information

Name: 
Office phone: 
Office hours: 
Office location: 
E-mail address: 
Division Secretary: Lula Lee, 141 AFA
Office phone: 685-4624
Note: Students are encouraged to contact the instructor at any time; however, making an appointment will guarantee the instructor’s availability at a specific time.