

Time & location:	T/Th, 11AM-12:15PM, Carroll 340A
Instructor:	Dr. Maria Leonora (Nori) Comello comello@email.unc.edu (Best way to reach me) (919) 928-2440 cell Skype: nori.comello
Office hours:	M, 3-4PM, Carroll 226 By appointment at other times (don't be shy; I'm happy to meet!)
Teaching assistant: E-mail:	Laura Marshall lhmarsha@live.unc.edu

Course Prerequisites

This is the PR capstone course. The prerequisites are Public Relations Principles (JOMC 137), Public Relations Writing (JOMC 232), and Case Studies in Public Relations (JOMC 431). Advertising and Public Relations Research (JOMC 279) is strongly recommended as background for this course, which places a great deal of emphasis on research. If you have not taken 279 yet, you should consider taking it first, or taking it at the same time as PR Campaigns if your schedule permits.

Course Overview and Goals

Public Relations Campaigns is designed to help you integrate what you've learned in prior classes and apply those skills in the development of a public relations campaign for a real-world client. This is an exciting and challenging process, and I look forward to working with you this semester!

By the end of this course, you will be prepared to think strategically when managing a public relations campaign. "Strategically" means thinking of an organization's goals in terms of the big picture and the long-term. It also means using a systematic approach (i.e., guided by theory/principles, research, and evaluation) to help you achieve those goals. By the end of the semester, you will:

- Understand the complexities of public relations campaign planning through individual and group work.
- Think critically about campaigns produced in a variety of domains.
- Experience the challenges and rewards of working with a real-world client and creating a PR campaign plan that meets the client's needs.
- Strengthen your management and teamwork skills by functioning as a "mini agency."
- Design and carry out appropriate research to inform your campaign.
- Develop a realistic campaign budget, timeline, and evaluation plan.
- Produce polished PR materials for your client that are consistent with strategy and that will enhance your professional portfolio.

Communication Policy

You are encouraged to e-mail me with any questions or comments you have throughout the semester. I will do my best to answer within 24 hours. If your e-mail relates to your group project, please copy your group members on the e-mail. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail and Sakai regularly for messages and updates.

The Honor Code

It is my duty to report any and all suspected Honor Code violations to the Student Attorney General. If you are not familiar with the Honor Code, please review it at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. As stated in the Honor Code, "It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and

support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic process or University student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.”

A special note about plagiarism: The Instrument of Student Governance at UNC defines plagiarism as “deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.” Copying-and-pasting from online sources without citing the source from which you obtained the content is clearly an instance of plagiarism. However, it may also be plagiarism if you rely too heavily on the structure and reasoning of another piece (for example, if you rely too much on swapping out synonyms or making only very superficial changes to content that is not yours). This type of extensive paraphrasing is not acceptable in this course, which requires you to demonstrate original thinking and analysis. If you have any questions about whether your use of reference material is appropriate, please see me. If any part of your work is judged by me and an independent faculty member to reflect inappropriate use of reference material, I reserve the right to adjust assignment and course grades downwards, in addition to reporting suspected violations as described in the preceding paragraph.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a diagnosed or suspected disability that you think might affect your performance in this course, you should contact the Department of Disability Services to determine whether and to what extent services or accommodations are available. If you think this might apply to you, please contact the Department of Disability Services at 962-8300 or visit the Department’s Website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu>. Please understand that I’m not qualified or permitted under University policies to provide any disability-related accommodations without authorization from DDS.

Diversity

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is committed to equality of educational opportunity. The University does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University’s nondiscrimination policies.

Attendance

Being on time is essential to keeping a professional job, and it will be equally important in this course. You are obliged to attend ALL class and team meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any given number of class or group meetings. Attendance is taken at the start of each class. If you are late to class, there is no guarantee that you will be marked as present. Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% deduction from your final grade. If you know in advance that you will need to miss a class for reasons related to school or work activities (e.g., job interview, conference, travel for athletes), please email me with confirmation of your participation in the activity as much in advance as possible.

Participation and Professionalism

I expect you to come to each class having completed assigned readings and being ready to discuss them. In the interest of hearing everyone’s perspectives, I may call on individuals who do not regularly participate on their own. Please act professionally in the classroom. This means being fully engaged in class discussions, team meetings, presentations, and client interactions. If you show a consistent pattern of disengagement or disrespect, this will be addressed with verbal and/or written warnings. Failure to improve behavior will negatively influence your final grade.

Use of Laptops and Other Technology

You are permitted to use laptops for note-taking, research, and other work as assigned in class. However, to minimize distractions to your classmates and to me, please minimize use of your laptop for non-class purposes. It’s particularly important to limit use of technology when we have visiting clients and guest speakers, because they have made a special effort to visit with us and deserve our undivided attention. During these visits, limit laptop use to obvious note-taking, and do not text.

Required Readings

There is no required textbook that you must purchase. I will rely primarily on selected chapters from a text (Strategic Public Relations Management by Austin & Pinkleton) and will place PDF copies of these on Sakai under Resources/Readings. Alternately, you may access the entire book as an e-book through the UNC library system (see link under Resources/Readings, but be aware that the system limits the number of simultaneous users of the online book). You may also find the book on reserve at Park Library. Other readings will come from several different sources and will be available on Sakai. You should complete the readings listed on the course schedule before class and be prepared to discuss during class.

Points Distribution and Grading Scale

Your success in this class will depend on strong performance individually and as a group. Points for some group work assignments are further broken down into points assigned by instructor and the client. For the peer score, your teammates will be evaluating your contributions to the group, and the average of these scores across your teammates will be applied toward your grade.

Assessments	Points	Breakdown		
		Instructor	Client	Peers
<i>Individual work</i>				
Reaction papers (RP; 3@5 points each)	15	15		
Personal brand presentation	5	5		
Research participation	5	5		
Blog post – campaign critique	10	10		
<i>Group work</i>				
Research proposal/materials	10	10		
Research report – presentation	10	10		
Research report – written	15	10	5	
Campaign plan – presentation	10	5	5	
Campaign plan – written	15	10	5	
<i>Peer evaluations</i>				
Mid-semester	5			5
End of semester	5			5
TOTAL	100	80	15	10

The points correspond to letter grades as indicated below. Scores falling in between point ranges will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Letter grade	Range of points	Interpretation
A	95-100	Highest level of attainment
A-	90-94	
B+	87-89	High level of attainment
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Adequate level of attainment
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Minimal passing level of attainment
D	60-66	
F	Below 60	Failed, unacceptable performance

Assignments

Assignments should be completed before the start of the class session on which they are due unless otherwise noted. Written assignments must be single-spaced with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Use “Assignments” on Sakai to turn in reaction papers and other individual work. Late assignments will receive a reduced grade, unless you have a valid reason and have made prior arrangements with me. Details for specific assignments will be discussed in class and/or posted on Sakai.

Reaction papers (RP; 15% of total grade)

Throughout the semester, I will pose questions that are intended to integrate text/lecture material with client-based work or your own personal experiences. You will be graded on the thoughtfulness and completeness of your responses, per the directions in each question. Use “Assignments” on Sakai to turn in your papers.

Personal brand presentation (5% of total grade)

Preparing to compete on the job market is analogous to planning a campaign for a client – except that YOU are the client, and enhancing and promoting your personal brand are the campaign goals. To put campaign planning principles to work in this capacity, you will give a two-minute personal brand story that you could use as a response to the standard interview question “So tell us about yourself.” These presentations will take place in the 2nd half of the semester.

Research participation (5% of total grade)

You will be asked to participate in academic research studies conducted within the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Participating in research is a valuable way for you to gain first-hand experience with mass communication research. You will be able to sign up online to participate in these studies. Studies will vary in length but must total one hour. Your participation may be completed at any time this semester that is convenient. If you don’t want to participate in research, please see me for an alternate assignment.

Blog post (10% of total grade)

Each person in class will choose a noteworthy campaign and will thoughtfully and thoroughly critique it according to dimensions we will have discussed in class. These critiques will be published in a class blog, which will also be publicly available. Full details will be posted under Assignments on Sakai.

Research proposal/materials (10% of total grade)

Your first team assessment involves proposing research to help you develop a plan to meet the needs of your client and key audiences. Research proposals should include background research (what is known about the company, the issue, target audiences, and previous efforts); your recommendations for primary research; survey and interview questions you plan to use; and your plans for obtaining your research participants. Specific guidelines will be provided in class. You will NOT be allowed to begin your research until you have obtained approval from me and (as needed) from the client.

Research report (25% of total grade)

You will present to the class (10%) and submit a written report (15%) of the findings of the research you conducted. At this point, you should be prepared to discuss preliminary campaign ideas that are suggested by research findings. Specific guidelines will be provided in class. Client evaluations will be part of the grade for the written report.

Campaign plan (25% of total grade)

You will present to the client and class (10%) and submit a comprehensive strategic campaign plan (15%) that represents the best possible solutions your team has developed to meet your client’s needs. Your plan must include 1) a review of the client’s needs, relevant literature, and the major findings of your research, 2) a communication matrix to summarize target audiences and their needs, 3) goals/objectives/strategies, timeline, budget, and evaluation plan, and 4) ready-to-use pieces (e.g., press releases, pitch letters, social media content, etc.) and other communication tools that support campaign objectives. Specific guidelines will be provided in class. Client evaluations will be part of the grades for presentation and written report.

Peer evaluations (10% of total grade)

You will evaluate the performance of each group member after you have completed your research report and at the end of the semester after you have turned in your final campaign plan. Peer evaluation forms will be available on Sakai under Assignments.

NO FINAL EXAM! Consider your campaign plan and presentation your final exam. Your ability to develop a well-founded, creative, and feasible plan will be the ultimate test of your mastery of the course material.