

School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

JOMC 431.001 "Case Studies in Public Relations" Spring 2014

Professor Queenie Byars
Phone/Mobile: 919.357.4975
E-mail: qbyars@email.unc.edu

Class meets TR at 9:30 a.m. -10:45 a.m., Carroll Hall 253
Office: Carroll Hall 223
Office Hours: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays
or by appointment

Faculty Biography: <http://www.jomc.unc.edu/faculty-staff-advertising-pr-faculty/byars-queenie>

General Requirements, Testing and Grading

Prerequisites:

To take this course as an undergraduate you must have successfully completed JOMC 137 "Principles of Advertising and Public Relations." Any graduate student enrolling in this course will have an additional special assignment related to the work in this class. I will meet with graduate students during the second week of class to discuss this in detail.

Course overview:

"Case Studies in Public Relations" provides a broad background and understanding of how PR professionals deal with the demanding and dynamic environment of corporate, government and nonprofit public relations. JOMC 431 builds on material covered in previous courses and will help prepare you for entry into the PR profession. We will examine public relations from a management perspective. In doing so, we will discuss various factors that affect how public relations is practiced in organizations to include identifying stakeholder groups, understanding message development, accommodating diversity and recognizing ethical issues. Additionally, we will examine management decisions, organizational issues, strategic communication and crisis communication. We also will spend time learning basic information about how publicly held corporations operate.

Course objectives:

By the end of the semester, you will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- (1) Critique public relations research, strategies and execution.
- (2) Address public relations challenges and opportunities.
- (3) Research and examine a recent real-world public relations case and make recommendations.
- (4) Critically analyze a variety of public relations cases.
- (5) Use effective presentation skills.

Required textbooks:

Public Relations Cases, Ninth Edition (2012). Jerry A. Hendrix and Darrell Hayes, Wadsworth Publishing. ISBN-10: 1111344426, ISBN-13:978-1111344429

Additional readings will be handed out in class or made available on Sakai or in the Park Library. It also is a good idea to read at least two daily newspapers online and to read *The Wall Street Journal*, which often provides excellent coverage of issues with public relations implications.

Other resources to use include national news magazines such as *Fast Company*, *Fortune, Inc.*, *Wired* or *Business Week* as well as a trade publication such as *PR Week*, *PR Tactics* or *O'Dwyer's PR Report*. Weekly will spend the first few minutes of class sharing PR news.

Method of study:

The case study is the major teaching tool for this course. The professor will present lecture material relevant to class cases and, along with guest speakers, provide real-world examples of a variety of public relations situations. Group discussion of cases is the heart of the class. Each student is expected to have read assigned case material *before* the class in which it is to be discussed and be prepared to participate *actively* in case discussions. Ongoing dynamic case material will also be presented as current events allow. *NOTE: Class attendance is essential. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to get an "A" in this course without active and thoughtful participation in the discussion of the cases along with additional research.* Students will also be called on to present case facts as well as analyze public relations strategies for assigned readings.

Case brief, book review and in-class exercises:

Students are required to turn in one written case brief and one book review (see Format for Written Case Brief and Book Review) on the assigned date. The quality and quantity of student participation in case discussions and other class assignments will be assessed by the professor and figured into the final grade.

Written case briefs should be 3 to 4 pages, double-spaced, using paragraph indents *NOTE: E-mailed case briefs will not be accepted without advance special permission.* See section on case briefs for further details. There also will be a number of class exercises where students will work in teams to solve public relations problems related to a scenario written by the instructor. Students must be present in class to get credit for group work and attend outside of class group meetings. *(NOTE: Scenario exercises figure into your class-participation grade (make-up work on scenario exercises is not possible).*

Student PR Firms:

The class will be divided into teams of four students each and will operate as “public relations firms.” Each firm will have a single account/organization to research and follow throughout the semester and present in-depth as a final project. Accounts will be assigned during the second week of class. A list of accounts to select from is included below. Spokespersons from each firm will give a five-minute standup briefing on the account monthly. The briefing should include a few PowerPoint slides with recent news, PR strategies, business developments, competition, stock performance, diversity issues and organization diversity profile, etc., concerning the account.

Your firm must identify an issue relevant to the organization by the third week of class and submit in writing, the organization's name, a brief synopsis (two to three paragraphs) of the situation and the name and phone number (or e-mail address) of a contact person who is willing to talk with you and share information about the issue and the organization's response to it. The due date for your final project is listed in the weekly schedule. Teams will make presentations two weeks prior to the end of classes. Your team's written project paper is due on the day you present. We will discuss this project during the semester and I will meet informally with each group to assess your progress.

Public Relations Firm Account Areas:

- Global economies, i.e. China, Japan, India, etc.,
- Diversity in PR
- Environmental issues
- Technology companies
- Government agencies
- Health and Pharmaceuticals

Term case study project:

Each student PR firm will complete an in-depth analysis of a selected public relations account issue. A separate handout with instructions for the JOMC 431 Final Project will be provided. This project constitutes a major portion of your class grade.

Examinations:

There will be a multiple choice midterm exam and a final exam. Make-up exams will be allowed only at the discretion of the professor. Textbooks, readings, in-class discussions and guest lectures will be covered in the exams. NOTE: You should plan to take notes (follow along on your computers) in class as the lecture expands beyond the weekly presentation slides posted on Blackboard.

Measurement Percentages		Grading Scale
Written case brief & book review	10%	A=100-94 A-= 93-90 B+=89-87 B= 86-84 B-=83-80 C+=79-77 C= 76-74 C-=73-70 D=69-65 F= 64 and below
Account Briefings & Class participation	20%	
Term case project (briefing and paper)	30%	
Midterm exam	20%	
Final exam	20%	

Work handed in by students is expected to be as professional as possible. That includes presentation of material (grammar, spelling, editing, etc.) as well as the quality of ideas. Papers and exams will be graded accordingly with points taken off for poor writing or poor organization and grammar and spelling. **NOTE:** All assignments must be typed.

Honor code:

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system. All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class, which includes written case briefs. Use of former students' case briefs constitutes a breach of the honor code and will be dealt with accordingly.

Diversity:

The University's policy statements on Equal Educational Opportunity and Nondiscrimination as outlined in the 2013-2014 Undergraduate Bulletin. <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/intro.html>. 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 or disabilities. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. If you need assistance or ADHD/LD services from The Learning Center please contact them at 919-962-7227 or <http://learningcenter.unc.edu/>

In-class reading assignments:

All textbook reading assignments, including cases, as well as extra reading assignments should be completed before the date for which they are assigned. See separate weekly schedule for dates. Remember, class discussion is an important part of your grade.

NOTE: Students can expect to be called upon to discuss assigned case study readings.

As part of your note taking and class preparation, you should include a one-sentence description of what the case is about and the message(s) the organization intentionally or inadvertently communicated. Following that, you should list 3-4 points, either positive or negative, concerning how the organization dealt with the issue from a communication/public relations standpoint. These points do not have to be written in complete sentences; instead, they are notes to yourself to assist you in taking part in the class discussion. We will discuss this further in class.

Sakai: Presentation slides and other handouts will be posted on Sakai for your convenience. Discussion Groups for firm/team accounts can also be setup.

WRITTEN CASE BRIEF FORMAT

Students must turn in one written case brief during the semester. Case briefs should be 4 pages in length (not including citation), typed double-space. They will be graded in three parts:

Part 1. Synopsis of case situation/facts to include identifying stakeholders (20 points);

Part 2. Analysis of case, including course terminology in text and lectures (50 points); and

Part 3. Spelling, grammar and editing of case brief and following these instructions (30 points).

The synopsis should include the pertinent facts of the case including the organization involved, a brief description of the situation, stakeholders and the outcome. Save your critique/analysis for the second part. Use your own words; do not regurgitate what the case says.

In the analysis (Part 2) you need to examine what the organization did and discuss whether it would be considered effective public relations. You might address whether the research used was appropriate given the situation, whether they had measurable goals and objectives, whether they accurately identified their publics. Also, did their communication efforts fit the situation? What messages were communicated? Did they formally evaluate their efforts? You may refer to other cases that we have discussed or will discuss for comparison's sake to make a point. Your opinions should be based on what you have learned about effective public relations. For this section, write in the first person (using I, me and my) to reflect your point of view.

Pay attention to good journalistic writing as well. Points will be taken off for poor editing and/or grammar, weak organization of ideas and spelling errors. Clear, succinct and accurate writing is just as important to a public relations person as it is to a journalist. Be sure that you don't unwittingly plagiarize material. Be sure to provide source citations. Remember that if you take an idea from the book, please attribute that to the text's authors.

Please put your name, date, and case title of the case you're briefing in the upper left-hand corner of your paper. Remember following format instructions is important.

NOTE: Submit a copy of this instruction sheet with your written case brief. Failure to submit this sheet with your book review means a deduction of 10 points.

BOOK REVIEW FORMAT

Each student must read and complete a book review that discusses a topic related to a public relations issue or case study. It can support your account team project or be totally different. The instructor must approve book selections in advance in order to satisfy the requirement.

Your book review will be graded in four parts:

Part 1. Format which includes following the written instructions on this sheet and sample book review format to be provided: 30 points

Part 2. Summary to include a strong overview and highlights plus specific reasons for recommending or not recommending the book: 30 points

Part 3. Spelling, grammar and editing: 30 points

Part 4. Selection of book topic or selection supports your research and interest, is current (copyright not older than 2009): 10 points

Book reviews should be typed, double spaced and 500 words in length. Use the heading format below to include the title, editor or author, publisher, copyright date, number of pages in book, price and pbk for paperback or hbk for hardback. Be sure to include a recommendation on whether or not the book is appropriate as supplemental reading for future public relations case studies courses. Additionally, the book review must be read, peer reviewed (edited) and initialed by at least one other student in the class prior to turn in.

Sample Book Review Heading:

Taking Our Country Back: The Crafting of Networked Politics from Howard Dean to Barack Obama by Daniel Kriess, Oxford University Press, 2012. 248 pp. \$ 24.95 pbk.

Communicator-In-Chief: How Barack Obama Used New Media Technology to Win the White House. Edited by John Allen Hendricks and Robert E. Denton, Jr., Lexington Books, 2010. 171 pp. \$26.82 pbk.

NOTE: Submit a copy of this instruction sheet with your written book review. Failure to submit this sheet with your book review means a deduction of 10 points.

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information; • demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.