

MEJO 531.3: Case Studies in Public Relations

Spring 2023

MW 12:30-1:45 p.m.

CA 58

Zoom meeting (passcode: 664712)

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/666208359>

Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course will help you think and act as a public relations professional who deals with the demanding dynamic environment of corporate, government, and nonprofit public relations. You will examine real-world situations and strategies and discuss factors that affect how we practice public relations, including identifying publics, developing strategies, embracing diversity and recognizing ethical issues.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Critique public relations research, strategies, and execution;
2. Address today's public relations challenges and opportunities;
3. Research and examine a real-world public relations case and make recommendations;
4. Apply the foundations of public relations to solve public relations problems;
5. Understand the transformation that has taken place in the public relations industry driven by digital technology and engagement.

ACEJMC Accreditation Core Values and Competencies by this course

1. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
2. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
3. Think critically, creatively and independently
4. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions in which they work
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society

Required Text

Swann, P. (2020). *Cases in public relations management: The rise of social media and activism*, 3rd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Prerequisites

MEJO 137 Principles of Advertising and Public Relations

Evaluation

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the following points and percentages:

Exam 1 & 2	200 pts
Team Project	
Case Report	100 pts
Presentation	20 pts
Peer Evaluation	30 pts
Class Participation	50 pts
Total	400 pts (100%)

Grading scale

A	95.00-100%	C	73.00-76.99%
A-	92.00-94.99%	C-	70.00-72.99%
B+	87.00-91.99%	D+	67.00-69.99%
B	83.00-86.99%	D	60.00-66.99%
B-	80.00-82.99%	F	Below 60.00%
C+	77.00-79.99%		

There will be **no round-up**.

Class Meeting

In-person meeting is a default mode of instruction. As long as it is possible to do so safely, we will meet in person. I understand the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may require changes to this plan and will be monitoring the situation closely. If I need to change the format of the course temporarily due to outbreaks of illness, I will announce this via email and the course Sakai site.

Exam

Exam is designed to test the student's knowledge and understanding of the main ideas covered in the readings, discussion, and exercises. The questions consist of multiple-choice, and true/false questions. There is no make-up exam for unexcused absence.

Team Project

The purpose of this assignment is to act as a capstone to all that we

have learned in this course. Your team select a new case not covered by the textbook. Your team submit a paper at Sakai-Assignment (Times New Roman 12 font size and double-spaced) and present to the class. This paper:

- Identify a problem, opportunity or ethical issue that an organization (for-profit or non-profit) faced that required significant public relations involvement.
- Background information about the organization, including its goals, mission, values, financial standing, products/services, and history.
- Identify and analyze key messages.
- Describe and criticize the public relations strategies and tactics that the organization developed and implemented to deal with the situation.
- Research and analyze the media coverage, or any other relevant publics' reaction and feedback, that the organization received as it relates to your issue.
- Compare and contrast with other cases discussed throughout the semester.
- Suggest a future campaign message that you would offer the organization's management based on your understanding about effective public relations practices.
- A list of all sources cited in a proper citation format (APA recommended).

Participation

Class participation consists of attendance, class exercise, and overall participation to class discussion. Students may take upto two unexcused absences and additional unexcused absences will result in a 10% reduction in the course grade. Students are required to submit document verification for excused absences, which fall under university guidelines.

Professionalism

Communication managers must be professional in every sense. Professionalism in this course means:

1. You are required to update yourself about current news cycle, especially business news related to public relations.
2. Attending class, and team meetings held outside of class, throughout the semester.
3. Being prepared for class (including completion of readings and assignments)
4. Treating classmates with respect during discussions and other interactions. Discrimination or harassment with regard to race, gender, creed, etc., will not be tolerated.
5. Completing class and team assignments on time. Any late assignment will receive 20 percent deduction from the original grade.

Honor Code

The Honor Code, embodying the ideals of academic honesty, integrity and responsible citizenship, has governed the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University for 125 years. Your acceptance of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in this code and a respect for this most significant University tradition. Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. For more information, go here: honor.unc.edu.

Student Accommodations

If you need accommodations to participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about accommodations visit the Accessibility Services website at accessibility.unc.edu.

Diversity

The University's policy statements on Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination are outlined at <http://policy.sites.unc.edu/files/2013/04/nondiscrim.pdf>. In summary, UNC 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.

Harassment

UNC does not tolerate harassment based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture, disability, or for any other reason. It is also a violation of the Honor Code and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Title IX of the Educational Amendments. If you need assistance with a harassment issue or problem, bring it to my attention or The Office of the Dean of Students, dos@unc.edu or 919.966.4042.

Use of Laptops and Other Technology

You are required bring your laptops or tablets for class participation, lecture quizzes, note-taking, research, and other work as assigned in class. However, to minimize distractions, please do not use your laptop for non-class activities (e.g. Facebook, iMessage, etc.). You should not be on your phone during class for non-lecture related activities. Please consult with the professor if you are recording the lectures.

Form

All writing assignments should be (1) submitted on letter size paper; (2) prepared in a Times New Roman 12-point typeface; (3) one inch margin at all side; and (4) double-spaced unless otherwise noted.

Course Schedule

The following is a tentative outline of topics over the course of the semester and is subject to change.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Jan 9 Jan 11	Course overview Intro to PR	Chapter 1 Appendix A & C
2	Jan 16 Jan 18	MLK (No Class) Intro to PR continued	
3	Jan 23 Jan 25	Ethics and the Law	Chapter 2
4	Jan 30 Feb 1	Corporate Social Responsibility	Chapter 3
5	Feb 6 Feb 8	Media Relations	Chapter 4
6	Feb 13 Feb 15	Well-being (No Class) Conflict Management	Chapter 5
7	Feb 20 Feb 22	Exam Prep Exam 1	
8	Feb 27 Mar 1	Activism Consumer Relations	Chapter 6 Chapter 7
9	Mar 6 Mar 8	Team Project Prep	
10	Mar 13-15	Spring Break (No Class)	
11	Mar 20 Mar 22	Entertainment and Leisure Community Relations	Chapter 8 Chapter 9
12	Mar 27 Mar 29	Cultural Considerations	Chapter 10
13	Apr 3 Apr 5	Financial and Investor Relations	Chapter 11
14	Apr 10 Apr 12	Team Project Prep	
15	Apr 17 Apr 19	Exam Prep Exam 2	
16	Apr 24 Apr 26	Presentations	
17	May 9 (T)	Final Exam Schedule by Noon	