

# **Introduction to Public Relations**

## **COMM 2330 – Spring 2022**

Instructor: John Kirby

*Office: Communications Building, Room 154*

*(office of Prof. Margaret Kirby)*

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*Class Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m., CM 156.*

*Office Hours: By appointment (e-mail).*

**Course Description:** This course is an exploration of development of public relations. The course is a presentation of the theory behind and the process of public relations, including the planning, implementation and evaluation of PR campaigns. There will also be a sales component to the class.

### **Required Text:**

Seitel, F.P. (2017). *The Practice of Public Relations* . **13th edition**. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Define public relations.
- Explain how public relations evolved in the United States.
- Distinguish public relations from other management functions.
- Demonstrate how to organize and compose a news release.
- Develop an understanding of public relations as a management function.
- Describe the various contexts for public relations.
- Describe the activities of public relations.
- Identify an organization's key publics
- Plan, produce and evaluate basic PR campaigns using a variety of communications avenues.

**Absence Policy:** Because class participation is essential, you may be dropped from the course after four consecutive absences (at the discretion of the instructor). Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. A student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive.

**Deadlines:** ALL deadlines are absolute. You need to get used to deadlines that exist in the off-campus world. All assignments will be due at the beginning of each class, and any late assignments will be penalized harshly.

**Excuses:** Don't bother to try any. I've heard most of them and have used some of them myself. Only deaths of immediate family members (parents, grand parents, siblings – ONLY), or your own, may be considered for an excused absence. Of course, you will need to provide proof (such as the obituary notice). Student athletes, or those participating in other college-sponsored activities that require an absence, will be excused, with prior notice to me and appropriate documentation.

**ADA Statement:** Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, visit the Disability Services Office in the Student Health & Wellness Center, or call (806) 716-2577.

**Diversity Statement:** In this class, the instructor will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

**Nondiscrimination Policy:** South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336, (806) 716-2360.

**Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations:** If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, Under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To [activate](#) accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Director of Health and Wellness. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Director of Health and Wellness at (806) 716-2362 or [email cgilster@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:cgilster@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

**Academic Honesty and Professional Conduct Policy:** The same standards and ethics will apply to students enrolled in this course as apply to public relations and media professionals. Violations of these standards will result in a failing grade for the assignment and immediate dismissal from the course will be considered. These standards include, but are not limited to:

1. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. You may not take material verbatim (word for word) from other sources such as previously published newspaper stories, books, magazine articles, the Internet, etc... To do so is to plagiarize.
2. Pay strict attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Since the invention of the dictionary and spell checker, there is no excuse for a misspelled word. To allow for a misspelled word to appear in any assignment you submit for a grade is laziness. Any misspelled words or factual errors will be graded harshly.

**Civility Code:** As future public relations professionals, you are to communicate with each other in a professional and civil manner. We all may feel passionately about certain issues; however, passion is no substitute for a solid grasp of the facts and sound, logical reasoning. Disparaging comments about gender, ethnicity, religion, etc... will not be tolerated.

Disruptive behaviors such as cell phones ringing, leaving and returning to class while in session, arriving late to class, talking with others during lectures/discussions, checking your e-mail or Facebook, sending/receiving text messages, eating or drinking in class, etc... will result in a substantial reduction in the participation portion of one's grade and a request that such students leave the class. Cell phones must be turned off, or be on vibrate and out of sight, during this class. They may only be activated in individual extenuating circumstances after consulting with the instructor.

**Consistent with the latest CDC recommendations**, we have revised our guidance for students, faculty, and staff who have a known exposure or have tested positive. Anyone with a known exposure should wear a mask for 10 days and should seek a COVID-19 test on day five after exposure. If you test positive or develop symptoms, you should immediately self-isolate and seek a COVID-19 test. Please immediately notify your instructor, supervisor, and DeEtte Edens, Associate Director of Health and Wellness, any time you test positive for COVID-19. Anyone who tests positive is required to self-isolate for five days. Following the five-day isolation period, if you are asymptomatic or your symptoms are resolving, you may return to work or class but should wear a mask for five additional days. If you are still symptomatic, please contact DeEtte Edens at [dedens@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dedens@southplainscollege.edu) or 806-716-2376 prior to your return date.

### **Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change at the discretion of instructor)**

Jan. 19	Syllabus
Jan. 24	Intro to course & Lecture: What is PR? (Read: chapter 1)
Jan. 26	Lecture: History of Public Relations(Read: chapter 2)
Jan. 31	TBD-Communications is a fluid business. We will be too!

### Participation

Missed (Classes for semester)	Class Contributions	Grade Range
0-2	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	90-100
0-2	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	80-90
0-2	Rare or no comments	70-80
2-3	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	70-80
2-3	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	60-70
2-3	Rare or no comments	50-60
3-4	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	50-60
3-4	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	40-50
3-4	Rare or no comments	30-40
More than 4		30

### GRADES:

500 points is an A:

100 points each for:

2 exams

2 papers

Class participation (it's a communications class):

**Participation:** In addition to exams, classwork, homework and overall assignments, you will receive a participation grade that is worth 100 points to your final grade. The grade is earned using the chart above.