Comm 3321 Public Relations: Theory and Practice
Fall 2016

Instructor
Dr. Louis K. Falk
Main 1.210C
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Personal Web Page Address: http://www.louisfalk.org/

Office Hours
In Person M 0800 - 1000
W 1830 - 1920, 2150 - 2230 (appointment needed)
Online Hours
T-TH 0900 – 1000 (Normally will respond to email within 10 minutes)
Or by appointment

Course Description
COMM 3321 -- Public Relations: Theory & Practice
A study of the management function that investigates and evaluates public attitudes, policies, means, and techniques used in the field to earn public understanding and acceptance.

Course Outcomes
As a foundation course, this basic public relations course will increase your understanding of the theory and practice of public relations. Students will be familiarized with the basic concepts and principles of public relations. The readings and class discussions will introduce you to the process of public relations and provide you with a better appreciation for public relations.
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain the theoretical and practical aspects of public relations.
2. Explain the historical, ethical, and sociological foundations of public relations.
3. Examine public relations as a management function.
4. Relate public relations to its communication function.
5. Focus on public relations Non-profit competencies.

Textbooks
ISBN 978-0133083576

Assignments and Grading
1. Class Participation (quizzes, in class assign, and partic.) 100 Points = 10%
2. Exams (2) 300 Points = 30%
3. Final (comprehensive) 100 Points = 10%
4. Blackboard Discussion Forum 200 Points = 20%
4. Agency Presentation 100 Points = 10%
5. Public Relation Fieldwork 200 Points = 20%
Total 1000 Points = 100%*
Grading
Grades will be based on the following point scale;
(A 900 - 1000), (B 800 - 899), (C 700 - 799), (D 600 - 699), (F 0 - 599)

*Grading rubrics are listed in separate documents on the main Blackboard Page under
the Course Materials heading.

Assignments
Blackboard Discussion Forum (DF)
There will be 5 Blackboard / Discussion Forums Assignments throughout the term.
These Blackboard / Discussion Forum Assignments will be available to complete
starting on Tuesday. The deadline to complete the blackboard discussion board
assignments will be on Thursday.

Agency Presentation (AP)
The agency presentation will be displayed using PowerPoint. The purpose of the
assignment is to analyze a major public relations agency. This assignment will cumulate
in a PowerPoint presentation to the class.

The agency presentation is a team project. It is the student’s responsibility to create or
join a team or group. Being part of a group is mandatory. Team assignments may not
be completed individually.

Guidelines for Teams:
Teams will consist of 4 students (5 with permission of the instructor). Every team
member is responsible for an equal amount of work / content. This must be shown
within the assignment. By a majority vote, a group member may be expelled from a
team. If a member is expelled that member will received a “0” for the assignment.
Team members will receive the same grade for each project.

Finally, all students are required to be present for every other student’s presentation. If
you are absent, leave early or miss any of the student presentations you will receive a
"0" for your personal presentation/ project grade.

Public Relations Fieldwork (PRF)
You will be required to participate in Public Relations Fieldwork for this course. You
must complete at least 24 hours of fieldwork throughout the term. This portion of your
grade is all or nothing. If you do not complete the 24 hours you will not get credit for this
portion of the course. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the hours and
maintain proof of these hours. Public Relations Fieldwork will be discussed in detail
during the first two class periods.

General Course Policies

Class Attendance
Students are expected to attend all classes and complete all assignments on time.
Since this is a night class you will be allowed one absence. Keep in mind that no make-
ups will allowed for in-class assignments (assignments that are dispensed and
completed during the same class period), because they are tied to a particular class session. For each additional absence a half letter grade will be deducted from the final course grade. Arriving late or leaving early (twice) is considered an absence. In addition two or more absences (at my discretion) may result in removal from the roster. Excused absences must be approved by the instructor. Generally - excused absences are for participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. If you are not present in class on the day assignments are returned it is up to the student to come to my office during office hours to receive the graded assignment.

**Email**
The primary contact outside of class will normally be through email. Being that this is a communication course all email correspondence initiated by the student will be written so that the email can be answered with a yes or a no response. Any emails deviating from this format will not be answered. The purpose of this policy is to get the student in the habit of crafting email in more of a proposal type format.

**Grade of Incomplete**
An incomplete grade of "I" may be given to a student who has been doing satisfactory work in a course but, for reasons beyond control of the student and deemed justifiable by the instructor, had not completed all requirements for a course when grades were submitted.

**Make-up Work**
No late assignments or make-up work will be accepted without an approved university excuse in writing and the written agreement of the instructor. If the previous requirement is satisfied, all make-up quizzes / exams will be given on the last Friday classes are in session. Withdrawal from the course except from the above mentioned is the student's responsibility.

**Course Materials**
The chapters in the books are assigned on a regular basis. It is expected that the reading be done prior to the class for which they are listed. In addition to the chapters in the book, each student will be responsible for additional readings throughout the course. These readings will be assigned by the instructor.

There will be assignments to collect theoretical information, data, and print examples to reflect ideas covered in class lectures. These assignments are designed to reinforce the lectures, sharpen your creativity and hone your presentation skills.

Cell phones and pagers should be turned off during class. Answering your cell phone during class is prohibited. Walking out of class to answer your phone or pager will be considered an absence.

**In Course Evaluations**
During the semester each student will be required to meet on two separate occasions with the instructor to determine the student's grade status in the class. During these meetings students will have the opportunity to suggest ways to improve the course.
Students will also have the opportunity to evaluate the instructor, as well as, the course at the end of the semester.

**Calendar of Activities**
Some important dates for Fall 2016 include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td>Fall classes begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 1</td>
<td>Last day to add or register for Fall classes</td>
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<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw (drop all classes) for a 80% refund</td>
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<td>Sept 5</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday, no classes</td>
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<td>Sept 14</td>
<td>Census day (last day to drop without it appearing on the transcript)</td>
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<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>Last day to drop (DR grade) a class or withdraw (grade of W)</td>
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<td>Nov 18 - Dec 8</td>
<td>Online course evaluations available</td>
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<td>Nov 24 - Nov 25</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>Study Day, no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 9 – Dec 15</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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**University Statements**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**
If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

**MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:**
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Online evaluations will be available before the end of the term. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades.

**SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:**
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

COURSE DROPS:
According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08-31-16</td>
<td>Orientation, Syllabi, What you can expect. Prepare your own definitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Public Relations Fieldwork Discussed</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>09-07-16</td>
<td>Defining Public Relations, The History and Growth of Public Relations Chs. 1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Public Relations Fieldwork Discussed Continued</em></td>
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<td><em>Blackboard Assignment 1 (Definition) 09-06-16 - 09-08-16</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>09-14-16</td>
<td>Communication, Public Opinion Chs. 3, 4</td>
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<td>09-21-16</td>
<td>Management Ch. 5</td>
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<td>*Blackboard Assignment 2 (Needles in Cola Cans) 09-20-16 - 09-22-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>09-28-16</td>
<td>Ethics, The Law Ch. 6, 7</td>
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<td>10-05-16</td>
<td>Research, Opinion Leaders Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-12-16</td>
<td>Exam 1 (Chapters 1 - 7 and Notes.) Agency Presentation Discussed - Due 12-07-16 1900 hrs. (PowerPoint portion must be submitted through Blackboard in the Course Materials Section)</td>
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<td><em>Blackboard Assignment 3 (Publics) 10-11-16 - 10-13-16</em></td>
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<td>10-19-16</td>
<td>The Publics -- Media, and Social Media, and Chs. 9, 10</td>
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<td>10-26-16</td>
<td>The Publics Continued -- Employees Relations, and Government, Chs. 11, 12</td>
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<td>11-02-16</td>
<td>The Publics Continued -- Community, and International Consumer Relations, Chs 13, 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-09-16</td>
<td>Public Relations Writing, Non Profits, Integrated Marketing Communication, Chs. 15, 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-16-16</td>
<td>Exam 2 (Chapters 8 - 14, &amp; Notes.) Social Media Research Discussed</td>
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<td>11-23-16</td>
<td>Social Media Research - Online</td>
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<td><em>Blackboard Assignment 4 (Social Media) 11-21-16 - 11-24-16</em></td>
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<td>11-30-16</td>
<td>Crisis Management, Launching a Career, Chs. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-07-16</td>
<td>Agency Presentation (PowerPoint submitted by 1900 hrs. Online), Course Discussion and Wrap Up</td>
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<td>*Blackboard Assignment 5 (Course Appraisal) 12-06-16 - 12-08-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-14-16</td>
<td>Final Exam?</td>
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*Blackboard / Discussion Board Forum will open on Tuesday 12:01 AM and close on Thursday 11:59 PM Central Standard Time*