EDAD 5368/6368
School Public Relations
Syllabus
Spring 2016

Instructor: Dr. Doyne “Scott” Elliff
Location / Time: Bay Hall 127
3/24, 4/7, 4/21, and 5/5 from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.; online activities as scheduled
Office Hours: Tuesdays (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.) & Thursdays (3:00 p.m.—5 p.m.)
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I. Course Description: Relationships between school districts and other societal institutions and their public opinions and attitudes; relationships with news media; conducting bond campaigns; the use of citizens’ advisory boards.

II. Rationale: Recent changes in our society and economy have substantially increased the need to equip educators, particularly campus and school district leaders, with public relations skills. School districts can no longer afford the passive, one-way communication programs which had been practiced in the past. Today, savvy education leaders are marketing their services and accomplishments in a much more aggressive and intentional fashion. In order to maximize shrinking resources and fend off unwarranted criticism, school districts must be proactive in dealing with both internal and external publics. The course is designed to be an integral part of the course work required for the Superintendent Certification in Texas and focuses on the SBEC-adopted competencies relating to communication, community relations, planning and development, ethics, and finance.

III/IV. State Adopted Proficiency Domains and TExES Competencies covered in this course:

Domain I--Leadership in the Educational Community

Competency 1--The superintendent knows how to act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner in order to promote the success of all students.

Competency 2--The superintendent knows how to shape district culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the educational community.

Competency 3--The superintendent knows how to communicate and collaborate with families and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources to ensure educational success for all students.

Competency 4--The superintendent knows how to respond to and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context, including working with the board of trustees, to achieve the district’s educational vision.
Domain II—Instructional Leadership

Competency 6—The superintendent knows how to advocate, nurture, and sustain an instructional program and a district culture that are conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Domain III—Administrative Leadership

Competency 8—The superintendent knows how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relation to district budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use.

Competency 10—The superintendent knows how to apply organizational, decision-making, and problem-solving skills to facilitate positive change in varied contexts

State Certification Examination (TExES): The Texas Examination of Educator Standards is based on the domains and competencies listed in the Test Framework that is a separate handout. Please see the SBEC website, http://www.sbec.state.tx.us, for the framework and the Superintendent Study Guide.

V. Carnegie Project on the Educational Doctorate (CPED) Principles:
It is the instructor’s intention that the course...

1. Is framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice.
2. Prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities.
3. Provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships.
4. Provides field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions.
5. Is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, that links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.
6. Emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

VI. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

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

1. Examine and explore the history and philosophy of school public relations
2. Recognize the need for public relations policy and an organized program of public relations based on action in the public interest
3. Demonstrate the importance of two-way communication
4. Plan, identify and assess the components of an effective school public
relations program and the array of internal and external publics it serves
5. Understand and determine the roles of school and community groups in interpreting
the school to its public.
6. Understand, explore and assess the methods that foster effective school-community
relationships with the media.
7. Formulate and develop the skills and strategies necessary to organize, administer and
assess public relations efforts.
8. Understand and assess community education as both a movement and a
communications medium.
9. Explore, determine and assess why public relations is an important management
function.
10. Understand, explore and analyze community power/political structures and their
impact on support for schools.
11. Design a series of marketing strategies for winning community support.

VII. COURSE TOPICS:

The course topics will include, but are not limited to:

The Scope of Public Relations
Characteristics of an Effective Public Relations Program
Internal and External Publics and Their Importance
Key Communicators and Their Importance in Successful PR Efforts
Building Confidence in Public Schools
Developing a Public Relations Program for a School District
Policies, Goals and Objectives and Their Importance
Survey Instruments for Collecting Data
Dealing with the Media
Public Relations and Politics
Bond Issues and Strategies for Successful Bond Elections
Public Relations and the School Board
Public Relations and the Improvement of School Climate
School Safety and Crisis Plans for School Districts

VIII. Instructional Methods and Activities:

Instructional delivery methods will include, but are not limited to, the following:

A. Lecture and Discussion
B. Research
C. Online discussion
D. Guest Speakers
E. Student Presentations
IX. Evaluation and Grade Assignment:

1. **School PR Cased Study Paper:** Each student will prepare a paper describing an authentic school district PR issue. Specific guidance on the format and content of the case study paper, *including additional requirements for students enrolled in EDAD 6368*, will be provided during the first class session.

   30% of Grade

2. **Model District PR Presentation:** Each student will develop and prepare an oral presentation, between 5 and 7 minutes in length, with media component (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi, or similar), that would be presented to a community organization on the topic, “Good News About our Schools,” “Facts About our District,” or similar. Quality of both the oral presentation and the media component will be evaluated for a final grade. Specific guidance on the format and content of the presentation will be provided during the first class session.

   20% of Grade

3. **Attendance at Superintendent PR Event / Reflection Paper.** Each student will attend a community event involving the district superintendent. Subsequently, a reflection paper of 2-3 pages will be developed describing the event and how evidence was or was not shown of the school public relations principles and goals discussed in class. Specific guidance on the format of and content of the reflection paper will be provided during the first class session.

   20% of Grade

4. **Mini-Quizzes:** Four (4) mini-quizzes will be administered online based on content from the text, lectures, presentations, and online activities and resources.

   20% of Grade

4. **Class Attendance and Participation:** While it is understood that many students have personal and professional responsibilities to fulfill during the term of this class, regular and punctual class attendance, as well as participation in online experiences, is expected.

   10% of Grade

X. Course Schedule and Policies:

This is a hybrid online / traditional course. In addition to online requirements, the class will meet for four in-person sessions. The schedule of class meetings and assignment due dates will be finalized and disseminated during the first class session. Below you will find the proposed in-person class schedule. Additional online meeting requirements, such as WebEx meetings or required viewing of video lectures or clips, will be scheduled. Availability of outside speakers and opportunities will impact the topics. The professor reserves the right and discretion to
change the schedule in order to take advantage of opportunities that may arise during the semester.

Meeting 1  
**Thursday, March 24**
Principles and Standards for a High-Quality School PR Program  
Goals of a School PR Program  
Publics: Internal and External  
Community Profile  
*Text: Chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7*

Meeting 2  
**Thursday, April 7**
School PR Tools  
Media Relations  
Social Media—Policies and Best Practices  
*Text: Chapters 8, 9, 10*

Meeting 3  
**Thursday, April 21**
Crisis Plans—Not “if,” but “when”  
Bond election campaigns  
*Text: Chapters 11, 12, and 13*

Meeting 4  
**Thursday, May 5**
Presentations  
Reflection Papers DUE  
Case Studies DUE

*WebEx online meetings may be scheduled on additional dates during the semester.*

**Policies**

- This is a graduate course, and graduate-level performance is expected. Students will be expected to comport themselves accordingly, arrive punctually for class, and refrain from texting or using cell phones during class time. Written assignments will be expected to demonstrate graduate-level writing skills. Students who need assistance with writing skills should avail themselves of assistance at CASA.

- Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Late assignments WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND CREDIT WILL NOT BE GIVEN unless in emergency situations, as approved by the instructor. Acceptance of late work and any grade penalties imposed will be at the discretion of the instructor.

- The textbook is an integral resource for this class, as are other readings required by the instructor. Students are expected to read all assigned textbook chapters and additional readings prior to class discussion.

- Attendance and class participation—both online and in class—are expected and will be considered in the computation of the final grade.
XI. REQUIRED TEXT(S):


Additionally, the professor will provide materials which will relate to various public relations topics of the course.

XI. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:


