Course Description
An exploration of the history and development of public relations including the theory and process of public relations, and the various publics and careers associated with the public relations industry.

Student Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:
- Understand the history and current state of the public relations profession
- Discuss the PRSA Code of Ethics
- Implement AP Style in their writing
- Demonstrate competency in public relations writing
- Analyze public relations strategy across a variety of contexts

Required or Recommended Readings

AP Stylebook 2018.

Major Course Requirements
*Assignment descriptions appear on the 4th page of this syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News Release</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitch Letter</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio Spot</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>HootSuite Certification Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Media Engagement Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Assignment</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Project</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (12 days at 5 points)</td>
<td>60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Points: 310

Grade Calculation:
- A: 90% of the total points (279 - 310 points)
- B: 80% of the total points (248 - 278 points)
- C: 70% of the total points (217 - 247 points)
- D: 60% of the total points (186 - 216 points)
- F: 50% of the total points (000 - 185 points)
A Successful Course Experience

A successful experience in this course will depend on your individual commitment and work ethic. Tips:

- Visit with me regularly during the semester, rather than waiting until finals to ask questions or express concerns
- Be proactive about your work; complete course readings and spend time familiarizing yourself with current events
- Discuss concepts, share real-world examples, and ask questions during class
- Talk to me about your professional goals
- Lift each other up; if you or a peer are struggling, communicate and work together to find a solution
- Be organized; make note of deadlines and avoid procrastination
- Communicate openly, honestly, and in a timely manner with your team(s)

If you have suggestions that will enrich your learning experience, please let me know.

Course Policies

Am I required to attend this course?

- Prompt arrival, attendance, and participation are all vital to your success in this course. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and contribute to the classroom experience by actively listening, asking questions, sharing examples, participating in discussions, and taking part in class activities.
- Attendance and participation will be graded. Each student will earn 5 points for every class session that they attend. If students attend but do not participate in class, I reserve the right to assign 0 points for the day. In all fairness, students will be notified that their lack of participation will result in 0 points before points are assigned.

What are your expectations for my assignments?

- It should go without saying that quality work is an expectation. As a Communication student, it is expected that you will have effective writing and speaking skills and that you will seek my help if you need assistance in these areas. It is also expected that your work will be free from plagiarism and will show that you are thinking “beyond the textbook.”
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date shown on the course syllabus, unless otherwise noted. If otherwise noted, assignments are due on the exact date and at the exact time noted on the assignment. If an assignment is late or missed, the student will not receive credit for the assignment.
- Assignments should be turned in as a hard copy unless otherwise noted. If an assignment is turned in using a means other than hard copy, the student will not receive credit for the assignment. Students should complete assignments on time to reduce the risk of emergencies, such as running out of ink, paper, losing their work, or not having access to a printer or computer.

What should I do if I am going to be absent?

- In the event of an absence, I must be notified before the missed class period in order for the absence to be excused. If I am not notified before the missed class period, the absence will be considered unexcused unless the student provides documentation for an excused absence (i.e., athletics, family emergencies, illness, university-sponsored travel). In this case, I reserve the right to determine whether an absence is excused.
- Late work will only be accepted for excused absences and must be completed within 7 days of the missed deadline.
- Regardless of the status of an absence, when a student is absent they are responsible for obtaining the information that was missed during class in a timely manner. Students should visit Blackboard to obtain notes and assignment pages. Students may also wish to select a classmate(s) at the beginning of the semester that will agree to help with this task.

I have a question about one of my grades, what should I do?

- Should a student have a question about their grade on a particular assignment, I follow the 24/7 rule: students must approach me no sooner than 24 hours and no later than 7 days after the assignment has been returned. Once 7 days have passed, the topic will be closed for discussion.

What type of citations should I use in my writing and speaking assignments?

- All assignments that require scholarly citations should adhere to the most current edition of the AP Stylebook, http://www.apstylebook.com
I need help with my work, what should I do?

- Should any situation arise, where I can be of assistance (i.e., you do not have a printer; you do not understand the assignment guidelines, etc.), please e-mail me or come talk to me.
- I am happy to help students with their understanding of assignments by reading through one draft of each class assignment; however, I will not be able to provide adequate assistance within 48 hours of a deadline, so students should be proactive about starting their assignments and seeking feedback early.

What are the rules for classroom conduct?

- I treat my classroom as a small community; thus, we will maintain a harassment-free environment that is welcoming to different viewpoints and ideas. Any profane or inappropriate ethnic, gender, racial, age, appearance, and/or lifestyle-related comments will not be accepted. Any student who violates this policy will be asked to leave the classroom.
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VIII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, online classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Where can I find class notes and assignment pages?

- In line with the University’s efforts to be more environmentally responsible, you will need to access our course page on Blackboard to download class notes and assignment pages. If you have concerns about this for any reason, please come visit with me so we can identify a solution together.

Where can I reach the instructor to ask questions about class?

- You may reach me in person or by phone in my office during office hours or via e-mail. I will respond to e-mail within 24 hours Monday-Friday. During the weekend, I will make every effort to respond to your e-mail, but cannot guarantee a timely response.
- I am happy to be friends on social media, but please do not ask questions about class on social media channels.

Dropping a Course

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in automatic failure (grade of “0”) of the assignment. Any student receiving more than one “0” for academic dishonesty or plagiarism will fail the course and may be expelled from the program. Note: All violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Dean and Office of Student Affairs whom maintains documentation of such offenses for at least 5 years.

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.
Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeals Process

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Assignment Descriptions

**Please do not use these guidelines to begin your work early, as they are incomplete. Full descriptions and grading rubrics will be provided to you in advance of the respective due dates.

News Release (20 points)
Students will write a news release and submit it for feedback. Once students have completed the required revisions, they will have a product that can be placed in their job portfolios.

Pitch Letter (20 points)
Students will write a pitch letter and submit it for feedback. Once students have completed the required revisions, they will have a product that can be placed in their job portfolios.

Radio Spot (20 points)
Students will write a pitch letter and submit it for feedback. Once students have completed the required revisions, they will have a product that can be placed in their job portfolios.

HootSuite Certification Exam (20 points)
Students will complete the HootSuite Certification Exam to earn a certificate that can be placed in their job portfolios.

Social Media Engagement Analysis (20 points)
Students will analyze an organization’s social media engagement. This product can be placed in their job portfolios.

Interview Assignment (50 points)
Students will be required to conduct an interview with a public relations professional of their choice. Students will be given a list of required questions to ask during the interview and will compose a blog discussing what they learned.
**Applied Project (100 points)**

Students will have 3 options for completing the final project. Class time will be designated toward allowing students to work on these assignments prior to the due date:

1. **Mini Internship:** Students will be required to partner with a local organization (non-profit or for-profit) that may need help with public relations. Students should provide a minimum of 20 hours of *free* public relations services for the organization. Students will be required to submit signed documentation from the organization’s management, along with a portfolio of their work and an explanation of how they utilized course concepts.

2. **Social Media Plan:** Students will be required to develop a social media plan for a local non-profit or for-profit organization.

3. **Case Analysis:** Students will be required to conduct an analysis of a recent public relations case. Students will be required to write a paper describing the background of the case, strategies used, a critique of the strategies, and recommendations for improvement.

**Participation (12 days at 5 points per day = 60 points)**

Attendance and participation will be graded. Each student will earn 5 points for every class session that they attend and sign the sign-in sheet. If students attend but do not participate in class, I reserve the right to assign 0 points for the day. Students should sign the sign-in sheet before they leave the classroom—the professor will not be responsible for “remembering” that a student attended a class that they did not sign in for.
**COMM-2330_001 Schedule**

**This schedule is tentative and subject to change. All changes will be to the benefit of the student.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday, August 28</th>
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| READ: Chapter 1 (pp. 2-17), Chapter 2  
DISCUSS: Introduction to PR, Types of PR, PR Ethics |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, September 4</th>
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| READ: Chapter 1 (pp. 18-22)  
DISCUSS: PR Careers |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, September 11</th>
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| READ: Chapter 12 (pp. 356-360; 362-364)  
DISCUSS: Employee & Consumer Relations |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, September 18</th>
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| READ: Chapter 12 (pp. 365-366; 367-373)  
DISCUSS: Community & Investor Relations |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, September 25</th>
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| READ: Supplement & Chapter 3 (pp. 66-68)  
DISCUSS: Media Relations, AP Style, & News Releases |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, October 2</th>
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| READ: Chapter 6 (pp. 183-190)  
DISCUSS: Pitch Letters  
News Release Due |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, October 9</th>
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| READ: Chapter 6 (pp. 195-197)  
DISCUSS: PR Writing: Radio Spot  
Pitch Letter Due |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, October 16</th>
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| READ: Chapter 6 (pp. 197-203)  
DISCUSS: PR Writing: Social Media Engagement & Plan  
Radio Spot Due |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, October 23</th>
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| READ: Chapter 5 (pp. 131-143); Chapter 4  
DISCUSS: Planning: Campaign & PR Research  
Social Media Engagement Analysis Due |

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<th>Tuesday, October 30</th>
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| READ: N/A  
DISCUSS: N/A  
HootSuite Certification Due |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, November 6</th>
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| READ: Supplement & Chapter 5 (pp. 144-151)  
DISCUSS: Planning: Crisis Communication |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, November 13</th>
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| READ: Chapter 5 (pp. 151-163)  
DISCUSS: Planning: Event Coordination |

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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, November 20</th>
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| READ: N/A  
DISCUSS: Interview Assignment Workshop |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 27</td>
<td>Interview Assignment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READ: N/A</td>
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<td>DISCUSS: Interview Highlights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 4</td>
<td>READ: N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DISCUSS: Applied Project Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 11</td>
<td>READ: N/A</td>
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<td>DISCUSS: N/A</td>
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**Note:**
- Interview Assignment Due on Tuesday, December 4.
- Applied Project Due on Tuesday, December 11 (4:30pm-7:00pm).