

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Communication and Media Studies COMS 383, L01
INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

Spring 2018

Monday, May 14 – Monday, June 25

(No class on Monday, May 21)

Lecture: MW 13:00-15:45

Instructor: Dr. Monique Solomon
Office: SS 254
E-Mail: solomonm@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1 pm to 3 pm or by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to the principles and practices of Public Relations (PR). The course covers theory, history and developments in PR, and its role in corporate, government, and not-for-profit organizations. Weekly topics include strategic planning, research and evaluation of PR programs, writing for PR, media relations, internet and social media, PR for social causes, crisis and issues management, and PR specializations.

Additional Information

Students are introduced to course material through lectures, readings, discussion, and in-class activities. Students practice preparing materials relevant to professionals in the field. The course emphasizes learning through participation, which means attendance is strongly encouraged for success in the course.

Objectives of the Course

- To provide an introduction to the foundational principles and practices of PR.
- To engage students to think critically about relationships between organizations and their publics.
- To guide students in developing best practices and ethical approaches to public relations through discussion of case studies in class, group, and individual work.

Textbooks and Readings

Cardin, M. and McMullan, K. (2014) *Canadian PR for the Real World* (1st ed.), Pearson Canada Inc., Toronto, ON.

Additional required readings will be posted on D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

- Laptops may be used during class for course related work only.
- Cell phones, gaming and similar devices must be turned off during class.
- Laptops and all electronic devices must be off during student presentations.
- No audio or video recording of any kind is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Email

Include **COMS 383** in the subject line of all email sent to your professor. Include your name in the email as it appears in your university registration. All communication with your instructor and your fellow students should be written in a courteous, professional manner.

Email is best used for short specific inquiries. If you have detailed questions about the course material or assignments, please speak with your instructor during office hours.

Email will be answered weekdays during regular working hours, and usually on a first-come, first-served basis. You can generally expect an answer within 24 hours, but email will not normally be answered in the evening or on weekends. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read or replied to until the next business day.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignments: * Details will be reviewed in class and posted on D2L.	Weight	Due
Class Participation Students are encouraged to take part in discussions, individual and group activities, and impromptu speaking and writing activities to gain checkpoints indicating participation in class.	10%	Ongoing throughout term
In-class Tests 1 & 2 The tests evaluate student knowledge of course concepts from the weekly readings and lectures. Closed book tests. The format may include multiple-choice, true-false, and matching questions.	15% 10%	May 30 June 18
Media Kit Students prepare assigned PR documents for a Media Kit. Class time will be provided. A final version of each document is to be handed in as a Media Kit.	25%	Friday June 15
Communication Plan Student groups prepare a Communications Plan (~ 2200 words) for a case study organization.	30%	June 25
Group Presentation of Communication Plan Groups will give a 10-minute presentation about their plan on the last day of class.	10%	June 25

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments

Assignments for the course are due via uploads to D2L on the due date stated on the course outline, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Please follow assignment instructions carefully. Please check the assignment instructions to see if a hard copy of the assignment is required.

As directed above, please hand in your assignments directly to your instructor. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/q-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/q-7.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Final grades are reported as letter grades. However, assignments, exams, and other work in the course are graded using a combination of letter grades and weighted raw scores for each individual assignment. This is converted into a percentage and letter grade for the assignment. All assignments are then weighted based on the percentage value for the course and the scale below is used to calculate the final grade.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Student

Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library). Visit the website for more details:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin.

Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. Research and citation resources are also available on the website of the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or visit the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library, at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calgary Police Service• Emergency Text Messaging• Emergency Evacuation & Assembly	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assembly

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safewalk Program 	<p>points</p> <p>If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</p>
<p>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	<p>http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</p> <p>403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca</p>
<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>

See the next page for the schedule

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

COMS 383 P18 Schedule		
<p>This is the anticipated schedule of topics. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated via D2L. Required course readings are mainly from the textbook. Additional required readings will be posted on D2L. It is a student's responsibility to check D2L for updates, and to ensure D2L emails are received at their correct email address. Participation (10%) ongoing throughout term.</p>		
Week	Date	Topics, Assignments, and Readings
Week 1	May 14	Introduction - What is Public Relations?
	May 16	Foundations - History and Ethics (Chapters 1 & 2)
Week 2	May 21	<i>Victoria Day (No class today)</i>
	May 23	Strategic Planning - Relationship Building (Reading on D2L)
Week 3	May 28	Strategic Planning - The PR Plan (Chapter 4)
	May 30	In-class Test 1 (15%) Strategic Planning - Research to Evaluation (Reading on D2L)
Week 4	June 4	Tactics - Media Materials (and other important documents) (Chapter 5)
	June 6	Tactics - Media Relations (Chapters 6 & 8)
Week 5	June 11	Tactics - Social Media & PR Online (Chapter 7; Reading on D2L)
	June 13	Contexts - Causes & CSR (Chapter 3)
	June 15	DUE: Media Kit (25%) Upload to D2L by Friday, June 15th
Week 6	June 18	In-class Test 2 (10%) Contexts - Crisis and Issues Management (Chapter 11)
	June 20	Contexts - Career Specializations
Week 7	June 25	Communication Plan Group Presentations (10%) DUE: Communication Plan (30%) Upload to D2L